

A Comparative Study of China and EU Aid Policies to Africa in the 21st Century: Will Trilateral Cooperation Increase Aid Effectiveness?

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Abstract Since the 21st Century, the effectiveness and quality of foreign aid has become the basic goal of both China and the EU. China's foreign aid to Africa has kept in line with the policy of equal treatment and is also highlighted by the mutual benefit of aid between African States. On the other hand, the EU as a traditional donor, has remained the largest foreign aid distributor in the world, especially on the African continent. As a result, EU foreign aid is until today an indispensable source of funding for many African countries. However, the effectiveness of China's and the EU's foreign aid policies on the African continent are being questioned and challenged. Some critics argue that China's and the EU's foreign aid policies to Africa are not bringing the best results as expected. What should be done to make progress on poverty reduction and hopefully eradicate poverty on the African continent? A comparative analysis is used in this paper to introduce a new international architecture of foreign aid through trilateral cooperation to improve aid effectiveness. Trilateral cooperation will give a chance to African countries to enhance and strengthen their own development capacity through assistance, ensure ownership and ultimately manage a smooth exit from foreign aid dependence.

Keywords: *trilateral cooperation, foreign aid policies, China, EU, Africa*

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1. Introduction

Since the beginning of the 21st century, foreign aid has become one of the most important research topics in International Relations, International Political Economy and other major research areas. Foreign aid was and is still one of the most important diplomatic tools for Sovereign States to achieve their strategic development goals, safeguard their economic interests and create better platforms for cooperation between States [1]. In addition, foreign aid has remained the historical and permanent political and economic phenomenon in International Relations, as well as an extension of political economy within national alliances or international organizations and has remained an important platform for countries to safeguard their economic interests and help to achieve their strategic objectives.

Foreign aid is a transfer of money or services from a country or an international organization intended to help out another country and its people. The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), an international organization whose goal is to shape policies that foster prosperity, equality and opportunity for all, estimated that aid spending by the world's richest

countries reached more than \$135 billion in 2014, in which around \$33 billion came from the United States, \$19 billion from the United Kingdom, \$16 billion from Germany and \$10 billion from France. African States received the biggest pie of foreign aid more than any other developing countries around the world, from the 1960's about \$6 billion to \$46 billion in 2011¹ [2]. Many Sub-Saharan African countries also received significant aid to help them fight against HIV - AIDS and other severe epidemics such as Ebola. For instance, in 2015, Kenya received about \$486 million of aid assistance to help combat HIV - AIDS, Democratic Republic of Congo and Sierra Leone received about the same amount to fight against Ebola in 2018. However, foreign aid does not always go to the poorest countries or countries fighting against deadly epidemics. Scholars who have researched the issue found out that donor countries are more likely to send foreign aid to former colonies or strategic economic partners. For example, France provide millions of dollars every year to its former African colonies to secure natural resources, Japan send its foreign aid to countries with

¹ Thompson Ayodele, Franklin Cudjoe, Temba A. Nolutshungu and Charles K. Sunwabe, "African Perspective on Aid: Foreign Assistance Will not Pull Africa Out of Poverty", CATO Institute, Economic Development Bulletin No. 2, September 14th, 2005. See [2].

similar political interests, and the USA send its foreign aid to its peace and security allies such as Egypt, South-Sudan, Sudan etc. to fight against terrorism, and sometimes donor countries use foreign aid to encourage trade with its aid recipient countries, like what China is doing on the African continent today. However, big donations don't guarantee the outcomes the donor country is looking for. There are quite a few ways that foreign aid programs go wrong, for instance when aid donor countries don't coordinate their aid when they don't involve the recipient countries and figure out how to allocate the money in the right direction. And when the recipient country is run by corrupted bureaucrats who don't use received foreign aid for its intended goals, foreign aid do more harm than good. This is what is happening now in many African countries.

Despite the good intention of aid donor countries around the world, they settle aid programs and aid policies to the African continent and don't involve the participation of their aid recipient countries while implementing them, and indirectly help or encourage corruption on the African continent and keep bad country leaders in power. This author believes that it is time to change this aid model and introduce a new aid infrastructure or aid model, one that encourages participation of aid recipient countries, in this case, African countries. Aid effectiveness is still low on the African continent because of the absence of the participation of African countries policy makers in many aid programs and policy implementation by foreign aid donors.

2. Status of Foreign Aid Policies to Africa

In the beginning of the 21st century, there has been important progress on poverty reduction, disease control and access to health care on the African continent. But, foreign aid has become a bad instrument of poverty reduction compared to other development indicators, such as investment, joint venture, etc.

Many African countries have been receiving foreign assistance for more than a century. Yet regardless of the motivation behind foreign aid, foreign aid has failed to deliver the promise of a sustainable economic growth and poverty reduction on the African continent. In 2000, many African countries became the focus of orchestrated world-wide pity, and the entire African continent has been turned into a place of despair in need of charity. By displaying despair, helplessness and hopelessness, many African countries have developed an unusual dependency on foreign aid to sustain their development plans, and in the process, many African countries have been stripped of self-initiative. The aid donors and African policy makers are partly to blame. Aid donors have somehow chosen to ignore the blatant alarm signals and have continued to pursue the same aid-based model for more than a half-century, even when the facts were apparent that the utilized aid model was ineffective. African policy makers on the other hand, also failed in calculating the best options for Africans and failed to generate consistent economic growth for their continent.

Billions of dollars have been provided through aid to the African continent. African countries annually receive

foreign aid to the tune of 13% to 15% of their GDP, and that is an unprecedented transfer of financial resources from rich countries to poor countries. For instance, the Commission on Africa established by former British Prime Minister Tony Blair raised more than \$50 billion a year on the international capital market and used it to reverse Africa's economy. From President George Bush's Millennium Challenge Account to President Donald Trump's new African strategy introduced on the 13th of December 2018, as well as Japan through TICAD, all have raised billions of dollars to boost grants to poorer African countries. Even the United Nations called on rich and developed countries to increase their foreign aid to 0.7% of GDP by 2015 to help develop African countries' economies. Current USA President Donald Trump is also likely to invest in Africa up to \$60 billion. Did these policies help or will help pull African countries out of their economic miasma? Most scholars who did research on the matter are skeptical. Alessina Alberto and David Dollar (2002) [3] in their paper "Who gives foreign aid to who and why?", discuss the pattern of allocation of foreign aid from various donors to receiving countries. They found out that direction of foreign aid is dictated by political and strategic consideration such as economic needs or policy performance of recipient countries. Balls Andrew [4] in his paper "Aid will not lift growth in Africa", however rushed, is stating hard truths behind the foreign aid industry, discourages African states and African policy makers to over-trust the foreign aid system.

The record of western aid to Africa is one of abysmal failure. According to IMF data, more than \$500 billion in foreign aid, quite the equivalent of four Marshall plans, were pumped into Africa between 1960 to 1998. Ironically, many African countries are still dependent on foreign aid to sustain their internal economic growth, and many African citizens are still living under the poverty line at average of 2 dollars a day or below. Much of the foreign aid received on the African continent was simply looted. However, it is important to recognize that African countries in general have fundamental weaknesses. Foreign aid dependency engendered laziness on the part of the African policy makers, and further undermined Africans ability to determine their own best economic and political policies. Foreign aid, has become for many African countries a permanent income, and African policy makers have lost the intensity and desire to look for other better ways and options of financing their own development programs or long-term development projects. Equally, African countries also have development opportunities and a lot of potential. Perhaps the issue with the low efficiency of foreign aid in Africa has got to do with African policy makers low capacity building. But until today, foreign aid efficiency on the African continent is still low, despite the increase of aid funds or donations by major aid donors around the world. The international community has proven that aid donors are moving into the third world, especially in African countries, with medical drugs, food relief for the victims of wars or peacekeepers for African civilians who are facing civil wars, etc. Those aid policies are not productive because they treat symptoms not the causes.

The international community should not focus on poverty eradication on the African continent, but rather

focus on how to cooperate with African countries' policy makers and help to create wealth. Wealth is a function of income, and income comes from funding a profitable trading opportunity or a balanced win-win cooperation. Rick Rowden in his paper "Poverty reduction is not development" argues how poverty reduction doesn't necessary mean development. He also emphasizes that in the modern official discourse of foreign aid agencies, it has become increasingly difficult for them to give a proper definition of what is "development", or give an incentive and clear understanding on what the foreign aid is supposed to be for poor countries [5]. The international media also needs to reframe the challenge that Africa is facing, from a challenge of despair to a challenge of hope. Africa should not be biased as a hopeless continent in need of pity, but a continent of hope and many development opportunities. In fact, the African Economic Outlook database shows that in 2019, the African continent's general economic performance improved, its Gross Domestic Product reached an estimated 3.5% in 2018, about the same as in 2017 and up from 2.1% in 2016. Africa's average GDP growth is projected to increase up to 4.0% in 2019 and 4.1% in 2020² [6].

2.1. The Status of China and the EU Aid Policies to Africa

Since the 21st century, China and the EU have emerged in transforming their aid models, aid methods, and aid policies. Since its foundation in 1993, the EU has been supporting African countries, and the EU-Africa bilateral relation has grown to the next level. In 2000, the African Union (AU) and the European Union established their formal bilateral cooperation framework through the African Union-European Union Summit³ [7]. The Summit has been the platform for dialogue between Europe and Africa. Each Summit focuses on the challenges that affect the two continents, such as peace and security and on their common interests such as creating youth employment opportunities, etc. At each AU - EU Summit, the EU introduces its new foreign development policies, including foreign aid policies to the African continent and highlight which policies are more critical, such as launch the aid for trade initiative, humanitarian aid and civil protection programs⁴ [8], etc. The 5th and previous edition of the AU - EU Summit, the first summit ever held in Sub-Saharan Africa, was held on November 29th and 30th 2017 in Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire. A retrospective look of the previous 4 Summits reveal that Africa and Europe are looking into strengthening their bilateral relations.

China's practice of providing foreign aid to its neighboring countries goes back to the early 1950's. China's first foreign assistance to Africa was in 1956, and

its first African aid recipient country was Egypt. Since the early 1950's, China's approach to foreign assistance in Africa gradually coalesced around mutual benefit.

In 2000, the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) was also implemented⁵ [9]. Since its implementation, China and Africa's bilateral cooperation over the years has been closer, and China's foreign aid policies to Africa are also highlighted during each FOCAC Summit. On the 7th and previous FOCAC Summit held on September 4th and 5th 2018 in Beijing, the Summit was concluded by the adoption of the FOCAC Beijing Action Plan (2019-2021), in which President Xi Jinping pledged \$60 billion in which aid to Africa estimated about \$15 billion USD [10].

Since 2000, China's foreign aid has changed significantly and its foreign aid policies have changed as well. Since the early 2000s, the Chinese international development community has been calling for a bilateral aid agency that will help to enhance existing cooperation between different government agencies and address the concerns of recipient countries. In 2018, China established the China International Development Cooperation Agency (CIDCA), a key agency in supporting ongoing operations of Chinese Embassies abroad and promoting South-South Cooperation [11]. The agency, along with China's Foreign Ministry, work hand in hand and establish together foreign aid policies. CIDCA answers directly to China's State Council, make China's overall foreign aid plans, and ensure that all future aid plans are more in line with China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). The One Belt One Road Initiative is becoming a leading component in China's overall foreign policy and reforms to China's foreign aid programs. However, the agency is not getting the attention of the Chinese Government as it should, because Chinese foreign aid is still in the hands of a few individuals from China's Economic and Commercial Counselor's office. Since the turn of the 21st century, China has increased its engagement with African countries, China is becoming the largest trading partner and one of major providers of foreign aid on the African continent. Today, China is more active on the African continent, more than its predecessor, the EU country members, former colonial overlords of many African countries. Chinese companies and its advisers are everywhere in Africa.

China's aid policies to Africa has two major characteristics: first, China's aid policies don't impose conditions or ask for favors from recipient countries; and second, China's aid policies improve self-development and capacity building. When it comes to providing aid, China has never attached any condition to any African country, rather political or economic. However, when it comes to investment, China, as any external investor, advocate win-win approaches and impose some conditions. Through China's aid policies to Africa, African countries now have access to Chinese concessional and non-concessional loans, and they are improving African countries infrastructure sector.

The EU on the other hand, its aid policies to Africa also have two major characteristics: first, its aid policies are long-term, planned and sustainable; and second, they cover some specific zones on the African continent,

² African Economic Outlook 2019; <https://www.afdb.org/en/knowledge/publications/african-economic-outlook>; accessed in July 16th, 2019. See [6].

³ See History of the African Union-European Union Summit; <http://www.sommetuaue2017.ci/en/history/>; accessed on June 5th, 2019. See [7].

⁴ European Commission: "Humanitarian aid and civil protection programs in the Horn of Africa"; <https://www.neweurope.eu/article/additional-e100-million-to-support-vulnerable-communities-in-the-horn-of-africa/>; accessed on June 6th, 2019. See [8].

⁵ See History of the FOCAC Forum; <https://www.focac.org/eng/>; accessed on June 6th, 2019. See [9].

notably the north part of Africa, the Sahel region and Lake Chad region, and the Horn of Africa. Recently, the EU has adopted seven major aid programs worth €99.5 million and has made additional funds to support them⁶ [12]. At National level, these programs are still under supervision, and only four African countries, notably Kenya, South-Sudan, Sudan and Ethiopia have agreed to launch them. At the regional level, these programs are being implemented in the East African Community (EAC), Southern African Development Community (SADC) as well as in the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS).

2.2. How Effective Are China and the EU Aid Policies to Africa?

Based on maintaining its original characteristics, known as the eight principles⁷ [13], Chinese aid policies to Africa have gradually achieved remarkable results, especially under the One Belt One Road Initiative, by implementing new ways of African aid reform, strengthened supervision and evaluation. Chinese aid policies to Africa reflects China's efforts on poverty eradication, exhibit a sense of justice, especially by maintaining equal treatment. Through infrastructure, China has lifted even the poorest countries in Africa from a poor level to a level of a developing countries. Through aid policy implementation, China's aid policies to Africa are implemented according to local African realities, especially by increasing African countries' agricultural techniques, improving their infrastructure sector, increasing African citizen know-how by technology transfer [14,15], etc.

The EU on the other hand, its aid policies to Africa are also significant. Politically speaking, the EU aid policies to Africa intensify cooperation on peace and security, human rights, democracy, fundamental freedoms, rule of law and good governance⁸ [16]. The EU aid policies in Africa focus more on education by promoting the use of affordable digital technologies for basic education and health, and is helping to improve women's and human rights on the African continent. Economically speaking, among many aid recipients around the world, African countries have been the most favored for EU foreign aid, and have been receiving its aid for a long time and at the widest range. Within the last decade, the EU has been updating its foreign aid policies to Africa, not only by reinforcing its "Emergency Trust Fund for Africa", critical to many African countries, or supporting the USA driven counter-terrorism policies in the Horn of Africa, and also by strengthening its Trade Related Assistance policies with African countries, reinforcing the Joint Africa - EU Strategy (JAES), as well as the implementation of a program to strengthen research and innovation capacity in

the African, Caribbean, and Pacific Group of States (ACP). The EU aid policies to Africa, especially by supporting the UN peacekeepers in Africa, reiterate the commitment to deepen partnership for peace and security at national and regional levels, ensure the sustainability of peace and security efforts in Africa, support the implementation of the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA). Lately, the EU has set up two newly approved programs that will support the United Nation's Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework, already active in Ethiopia, and new funds have been approved for two ongoing development programs in Kenya.

3. Challenges that China and the EU Face while Implementing Their Foreign Aid Policies to Africa

The fundamental basis and target of China's foreign aid policies are not that different from the ones of the EU. This author believes that both China and the EU, while implementing their aid policies in Africa or elsewhere, are aiming to improve recipient countries' economic performances and social welfare systems, while also serving their own national interests. However, China and the EU, despite their good intention, both face many challenges that affect their foreign aid effectiveness. China and the EU aid policies in Africa tend to respond more to their interests rather than aid recipients.

The common challenge that China and the EU share is, their aid policies can be characterized as a micro-macro paradox. For example, China and the EU set policies that support the approach to food aid. Tonnes of rice and beans are given to many African countries every year. But those tonnes of rice and beans are produced or imported from China and Europe. African farmers are also producing rice and beans, and probably a better quality, but China and the EU instead of buying rice and beans from local African farmers, which can potentially help them create a more sustainable market for them, deliver their tonnes of rice and beans and put local African farmers out of business. For instance, earlier this year in March 2019, Mozambique encountered a severe cyclone (cyclone IDAI) and China, by the Chinese Ambassador in Mozambique Mr. Su Jian, donated 100 tonnes of rice to the Headquarter of Mozambique National Disaster Relief Bureau. Mozambique's neighboring countries', Tanzania, Zambia, etc., farmers produce rice and maybe a better quality than the one offered by China. China could have bought the rice locally, which might have increased local farmers revenue and probably at a lower price. The European Union also does the same in many other African countries.

Despite the effort of China and the EU while providing food aid, they don't solve hunger nor famine on the African continent, and they certainly do not create jobs as well. If they were buying food aid from local African farmers, they could have encouraged more local farmers to produce more and at the same time create jobs, reducing alarming unemployment of youth in Africa. This is one of many examples that are happening, however short-term evaluated, but are being sustained by China and the EU on the African continent.

⁶ European Commission Press Release Database; See: http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-19-2729_en.htm; accessed on June 7th, 2019. See [12].

⁷ The eight principles refer to Chinese Premier Zhou En Lai official visit to Africa in 1964, he announced the eight principles which have been since the cornerstone of Chinese foreign aid. See [13].

⁸ Negotiating directives for a Partnership Agreement between the European Union and its Member States of the one part, and with countries of the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States; Brussels, 21 June 2018; <http://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-8094-2018-ADD-1/en/pdf>; accessed in June 22nd, 2019. See [16].

Scholars from different areas who did research on how to increase aid effectiveness found that by cooperation, there is a chance to improve aid effectiveness, especially in Africa. Uwe Wissenbach and Benrt Berger in their paper "EU-China-Africa Trilateral Development Cooperation" underline how "cooperation" is important. In their research, they found out that resolving North-South differences can no longer proceed without allowing developing countries an equal voice, propose instead trilateral cooperation [17]. Hang Zhou, another scholar, in his paper, "China-Britain-Uganda: Trilateral Development Cooperation in Agriculture", also highlights the importance of cooperation and argues that China, Britain and Uganda, need to strengthen their cooperation in order to eradicate poverty and hunger in Africa [18].

The critical challenge for China's foreign aid efficiency is its different approach while implementing its aid policies or delivering foreign aid. China's approach to the global south, especially while providing aid, differ in many aspects from the standard of Official Development Assistance (ODA) set by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), which the EU follows. The problem is that Sino - Africa interactions have not been well studied and understood. So, there seems to be a rise of criticism of Chinese relations with the global south, especially with African countries. Some critics accuse China of loading African countries with heavy loans, increasing African countries' foreign debt burden, others accuse China of taking advantage of corrupt African Governments and bureaucrats and having its hands on massive resources. China's aid policies to Africa, along with its investment policies are now being questioned. Critics have long argued that Chinese aid to Africa is mainly self-interested and perhaps even harmful for many African countries [19]. Some argue that Beijing is using its abundant largesse to secure natural resources on the African continent. From an African perspective, China, as any other major aid donor in Africa, has its own agenda, its own strategy. In fact, the central question is that all States dealing and engaging with Africa have their own national interests zealously and selfishly safe guarded. There is no father Christmas State interested in Africa. To believe otherwise is to believe in a myth. Therefore, all external actors, including the EU or its member countries, are present on the African continent to present an opportunity on poverty reduction. The ability to utilize that opportunity and turn it into an advantage lies in the hands of African citizens themselves. African countries have realized that foreign aid has not been effective as expected. The problem is that many African countries lack the internal, institutional framework and policy framework that can make it possible for them to benefit from their external relations. The productive margin in many African States' search for revenue does not necessarily lie in their own domestic economy, but rather lies with international donors. Until today, Africa's development plans are drawn thousands of miles away by international institutions like the IMF or the World Bank, developing countries like China, India, Russia, or even developed countries like the EU member countries, the United States of America and Japan. And most of the time, these institutions and aid donor countries, whatever they draw or implement as aid policies, without African countries' participation or

cooperation, will always be out of touch with Africa's local realities. All implemented aid policies will always be ineffective at some point. This history has taught us a lesson. In the 1960s, the donors themselves contributed much to the failure of aid effectiveness in Africa because foreign loans and aid programs were badly monitored and often stolen by corrupt bureaucrats. For many African countries, especially corrupted ones, it is still the same, bureaucrats are the ones profiting more from the hand of the aid donor.

China's challenges while engaging with Africa today, especially while implementing its aid policies, is that China failed to respond or to follow the standards of the ODA set by the OECD, perhaps because China is not a member of the OECD and doesn't really need to follow the given standards, and China is also trying to prove that there are many other options to reach the same objectives. China prefers using its own methods and strategy to achieve the same results. But will China's aid policies to Africa outcome be different from its predecessor?

The EU on the other hand, especially while implementing its aid policies, its challenge is how to secure its own interests on the African continent despite the rise of other major aid donors, mostly BRICS country members. Specifically, the EU is aware of the intensive presence of China's development programs in Africa especially in infrastructure, agriculture and mining. Many African countries are turning their interests from the West to the East, they are especially looking for other options on how to strengthen their bilateral relations with Asian emerging countries, especially China and India. Besides Africa, the EU is also aware of China's position as a key global actor and leading technological power in the world. And this poses a major threat to the EU [20]. With the intensive China's presence on the African continent, the EU's interest in Africa will be threatened, unless the EU proposes a more balanced plan of action or aid programs that can include the participation of China. In this regard, the EU has made progress. In June 13th, 2019, the EU launched its External Investment Plan (EIP) with the private sector in many African States which is bringing key institutions and individuals in Africa together. The main objectives of the EIP is to uplift private and public investment through a variety of financial instruments, including grants provided by the EU. The EIP will boost both private and public investment for African States, and is enhancing a favorable investment climate and will help create job opportunities, foster innovation and sustainable economic growth in the framework of an integrated approach as well as strengthen economic and commercial ties between European and African young generations.

The challenge that is even obvious is, China and the EU approach to Africa, or so to say China and the EU aid policies to Africa seems to be a competition, rather than cooperation. For Africa, this might be a good thing because competition will give the African continent best options and choices. The challenge will be for the African policy makers or leaders being forced to choose which ones respond to their interests, reminiscent of the cold war mantra. However, neither China and the EU's aid policies to Africa will once and for all eradicate poverty in Africa without the African States policy makers involvement and cooperation. African States should be the ones making

demands on what they need as foreign aid, rather than being satisfied with clichés of mutual benefits or grants from China and the EU.

4. Trilateral Cooperation: Why Is It the Best Option to Increase Aid Effectiveness?

Trilateral Cooperation is a form of cooperation, if well managed, benefits all parties concerned, and is becoming the best option of interaction in the 21st century, despite the rise of protectionism globally. The need to ensure that trilateral cooperation will benefit developing countries, in this case, African countries, seems to be generally accepted in policy documents issued by the United Nations (3362-S-VII), the African, Caribbean, and Pacific Group States (ACP), the African Union, etc. and in policy documents issued by other international bodies, such as the African Development Bank, the European Investment Bank, etc.

China and the EU are major players in the international community [21], they are also two of the three largest economies and traders in the world, and their bilateral cooperation have caught the attention of international media. By strengthening their bilateral relationship, the EU and China have committed to a comprehensive strategic partnership as expressed in the EU-China 2020 Strategic Agenda for Cooperation [22]. The EU is China's biggest trading partner, and China is the EU's second biggest trading partner. China and the EU's trade average reach €1 billion a day. Both China and the EU oppose protectionism and advocate for free trade. In 2015, a joint statement between China and the EU on "Cost-effective, low-carbon economy" was signed, China and the EU both are committed to implementing the 2015 Paris Agreement. Lately, on March 12, 2019, the EU and China launched their new bilateral cooperation, which will further strengthen their mutual relation and open new development opportunities. This seems to work well for China and the EU, they mastered on finding common ground to secure their common interests. But when it comes to African issues, China and the EU haven't yet found a common ground or even a formal way of cooperation. In this regard, African States need to mobilize the right mindsets, rather than expecting more external aid or mentally marry to the idea that nothing can get moving without external finance, external involvement or even international appeals to raise money, and only this way can open more ways of cooperation.

Trilateral cooperation will work out for Africa if African States come as one and redress existing fundamental inequality, pervasive corruption, and power struggles that are undermining its society. What are African States doing about this to encourage trilateral cooperation? The Africa that we normally hear about in the news is an Africa about death, poverty and disease. But Africa is a continent of 54 countries, many African countries in some specific areas are emerging even faster than many Asian developing countries. This is the narrative of the rising Africa. As a case study, Rwanda, is a Sub-Saharan country that has gone through many trials

and tribulations. To encourage trilateral cooperation, Rwanda has decided to become the technology hub on the African continent. Rwanda, as many African countries, is a country with many mountains and hilly terrain. It is very difficult to deliver services to people, especially medical services. To overcome this issue, in order to save its citizen lives, Rwanda has decided to use drones to deliver lifesaving drugs, vaccines and blood to citizens in unreachable places. Rwanda is now working with ZIPLINE company, with UPS as well as GAVI, a global vaccine alliance to save lives.

5. How to Enhance Trilateral Cooperation in the Best Interest of Africa?

The domestic issues in Africa have for a long time paved a way for other foreign sovereign states to take advantage of the continent's rare resources. However, African countries, under the auspices of the African Union, have decided to work together and set policies and demands that are the best options for Africa. As case study, African countries have joined their hands to fight against climate change, and climate change is a global issue that is catching also the attention of the West as well as the East. The whole African continent contributes less than 3% of greenhouse gas emissions but is disproportionately suffering from the negative impacts of climate change. Very often, many African countries suffer drought and floods, and it is getting more frequent. To overcome this, in 2016, the African Development Bank - AfDB has stated that it plans to invest huge amounts in funding pledges that are aimed at combating climate change in Africa. During the 31st Session Seminar of the New Partnership for Africa's Development Heads of State and Government Orientation Committee back in 2016, the AfDB President Mr. Akinwumi Adesina revealed a raise of capital of \$5 billion per year until 2020 to fight against climate change in Africa. At the national level, African countries under the auspices and support of the African Union, also decided to form an organization - "the African Risk Capacity (ARC)", a weather-based insurance agency that helps African countries to better plan, prepare, and respond to extreme weather events and natural disasters. Today, more than 32 African countries pay insurance each year to the insurance agency, about \$3 million a year from their own resources so that in the event any African country that faces a difficult drought situation or flood, the money is paid out to the country to take care of its populations instead of waiting for foreign aid to come. In 2018 only, the African Risk Capacity insurance agency paid more than \$20 million to Mauritania, Niger and Senegal. All these initiatives and efforts enabled the African continent to take care of more than one million African citizen affected by drought on the continent, helped to restore livelihoods, and this initiative is one of the key solutions to decrease illegal immigration, either to neighboring countries or Europe. This initiative is one of the many of Africa's self-initiatives that has caught the attention of the West and will be a key component to encourage trilateral cooperation in regard to Africa's

interests, and might be one of the best solutions to decrease illegal immigration in European countries. This Africa's self-initiative has raised the interest and support from EU country members, notably France, Italy, England and Germany, as well as NGO's such as the World Food Program (WFP), Medecin Sans Frontieres (MSF), etc. Lately, the World Food Program and African Risk Capacity agency have extended their administrative service agreement until 2024.

Besides supporting the AfDB and the African Union on the ARC initiative, France and Germany are also working with the AfDB and the AU on critical development sectors such as energy to improve the quality life of African citizens. In this regard, the AfDB managed to raise about \$12 billion a year to help light up and power Africa. France and Germany also launched the "Africa Renewable Energy Initiative", which raised awareness to international medias, and is an encouraging move on implementing trilateral cooperation on the African continent. There are many Africa's self-initiative development plans, such as the Agenda 2063, the East African Community 2050 Development Vision, etc. However, for now, African countries cannot achieve and sustain their development initiatives by themselves without foreign intervention or foreign assistance. In this regard, they still need foreign aid, especially the assistance of China and the EU. Africa's self-initiative development programs should be the focus of China and the EU while implementing their foreign aid policies to Africa, and in future, through cooperation with African countries, and pushing forward trilateral cooperation, aid effectiveness will increase on the African continent.

6. Conclusions

This paper focused on how to improve foreign aid effectiveness in Africa by proposing a new international cooperation - trilateral cooperation between China, the EU and Africa. Despite many research conclusions on how foreign aid is ineffective on the African continent or how foreign aid is a bad instrument for sustainable development, this author believes that the problem is not that foreign aid is a bad instrument for a sustainable development, but only by being dependent on it is it. Unpaved roads and abandoned areas are accessible now because of the increase of aid in the infrastructure sector; agricultural technologies are being transferred to African farmers to fight against hunger and famine; peacekeeping troops are helping in many African countries facing civil wars; a fight against HIV - AIDS and malaria is being implemented in many African countries, etc. Reshaping this mentality maybe will change the outcome. In the past sixty years, at least a dozen developing countries, mostly Asian, and a few African, have experienced phenomenal economic growth, such as China, South-Korea, Rwanda, Angola, Ethiopia, etc. through well managed foreign aid.

This paper also focused on a comparative study between China and the EU aid policies to Africa since the beginning of the 21st century with the view of finding out how to improve aid effectiveness on the African continent, analyzing different aid concepts, aid characteristics, etc.

The paper also pointed out some challenges that China and the EU are facing while implementing their aid policies to Africa, and the reason why there are still problems of aid effectiveness through which reflection and approach to policy directions can help to improve African countries' economic growth through foreign aid. Qualitative method of analysis was also adopted in this paper.

A takeaway from this paper is the introduction of trilateral cooperation between China, the EU and Africa. Trilateral cooperation will give a chance to African countries to enhance and strengthen their own capacity through foreign aid or foreign assistance, ensure ownership and ultimately manage a smooth exit from foreign aid dependence. A guidance for China and the EU through South-South Cooperation as well as North-South Cooperation can be a key component in reinforcing trilateral cooperation. China's increased presence in Africa can offer major and rare opportunities for trilateral cooperation to the EU. However, it is important to recall that the rationality of African countries must be aroused to produce bilateral agreements that play at their epicenter. History has taught us a lesson, there was never and never will be no father Christmas state interested in Africa without nothing to gain in return. Therefore, it is up to African policy makers to make the best options for them and set their priorities right to welcome trilateral cooperation at their best interests. Neither China nor the EU will ever be saviors of Africa's fundamental problems and realities. The desire of China and the EU to be more active on the African continent, especially by providing well-guided foreign aid, supporting ongoing Africa's self-development initiatives as well as linking the Sustainable Development Goals with African countries' National Development Goals is welcoming news for African countries, but Africans themselves must be mindful of their policies driven nation interests as China, the EU member countries have done over the years.

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