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## EMERGING DONORS IN SOUTH, SOUTH-EAST AND EAST ASIA

**Keywords:** ODA, South-South cooperation, development assistance, Asia, emerging donors

**ABSTRACT:** South Asia, East Asia and South-East Asia have a significant number of recipients of Official Development Assistance (ODA), including the Least Developed Countries. The importance of this part of the world in terms of global trade and geopolitics is self-evident and contributes to the reasons why major members of the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC), including Japan and South Korea, have a clear interest in being actively engaged in development cooperation within the region. There are, however, at least five emerging donor states, also active in the region, who operate outside the framework of the DAC. The aim of the text is to provide a brief comparative analysis of the development activities of: India, the Peoples Republic of China, the Republic of China, Singapore and Thailand.

The article is a secondary analysis of both: official statistical data and various reports and documents. The structure of this text reflects the interdependent nature of: The development experience gathered by each of the emerging donors under consideration, their ideas and perspectives on aid mechanisms, the financial contributions made by each to further South-South development cooperation.

While the differences in scale of development assistance offered by the identified list of emerging donors is immediately apparent, the contributions from the 'perceived' smaller players should not, and must not, be

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underestimated. The existing aid coordination deficit in Asia could be addressed by closer cooperation between the ASEAN and the ADB. These established institutions should perhaps do their best to integrate two newly created organizations, the AIIB and the NDB, into regional aid mechanisms.

South Asia, East Asia and South-East Asia have a significant number of recipients of Official Development Assistance (ODA), including those identified as Least Developed Countries (Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, East Timor, Laos, Myanmar and Nepal). In fact only few countries and some territories from this macro-region (Brunei, Hong Kong SAR, Japan, Macao SAR, Republic of China/Taiwan, Singapore and South Korea) are not included on the DAC List of ODA recipients (United Nations Committee for Development Policy; OECD. 2014).

Calls for international assistance are answered by many donor countries from all over the World. Development assistance<sup>3</sup> is mainly offered by the OECD's<sup>4</sup> Development Assistance Committee (DAC) members<sup>5</sup>, the so called traditional donors, including Japan and South Korea. How-

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<sup>3</sup> The term should be understood as financial assistance and material support offered, mainly to countries from Asia, Africa, and Latin America and the Caribbean with the aim of increasing the pace of social and economic change and improving living standards for their societies. The essence of development aid is non-market, voluntary, bilateral and multilateral, financial transfer from more developed nations to developing countries and countries in transition.

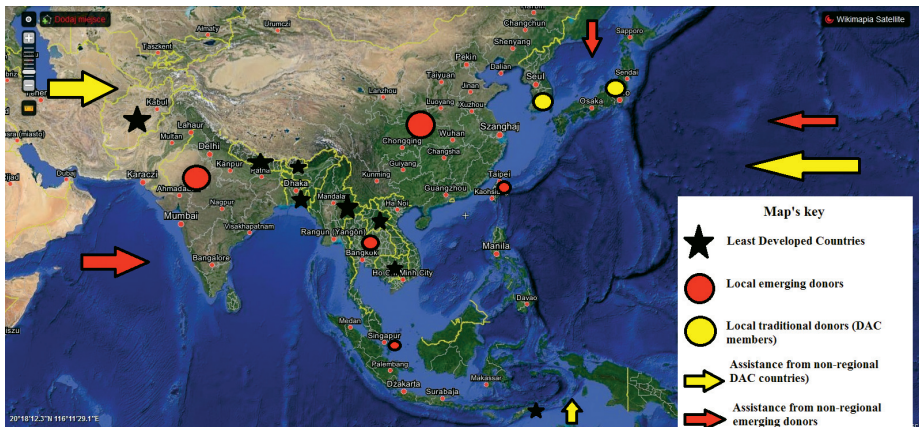
<sup>4</sup> OECD stands for the Organization for Economic Cooperation Development.

<sup>5</sup> The DAC has created the concept of ODA limiting it to 'flows to countries and territories on the DAC List of ODA Recipients and to multilateral institutions which are:

- i. provided by official agencies, including state and local governments, or by their executive agencies; and
- ii. each transaction of which:
  - a) is administered with the promotion of the economic development and welfare of developing countries as its main objective; and
  - b) is concessional in character and conveys a grant element of at least 25 per cent (...)' (OECD's webpage:

Official development assistance – definition and coverage). The definition of ODA and other formal requirements are not only describing but also shaping 'the product' of DAC's members' aid. Some non-DAC donors, including Peoples Republic of China and India, refuse to limit their development assistance to the framework of ODA and, in doing so, create their own aid management norms and standards.

ever, the importance of the contributions made by the other group under consideration, emerging donors<sup>6</sup>, should not be underestimated. Not only does the development assistance offered by these emerging donors go some way to meeting the needs of the recipients, but also promises to strengthen and further develop the idea of panregional (interregional), South-South cooperation between many developing countries. This broad category of emerging donor countries, operating outside the framework of the DAC, includes such important actors as: India, Peoples Republic of China (PRC), Republic of China (ROC)<sup>7</sup>, Singapore and Thailand. The aim of the text is to provide a brief comparative analysis of the development activities of these emerging donors, which often go beyond Asia.



**Image 1.** Development cooperation scheme in South, South-East and East Asia.

Source: based on [www.wikimapia.org](http://www.wikimapia.org).

<sup>6</sup> For the purpose of this text the term 'emerging donor' is used to describe those countries offering their aid without membership of the DAC that have operated continuously for a number of years, and have created specialized aid management institutions (agencies, ministerial departments, etc.) and bilateral programs exceeding USD 10 million annually.

<sup>7</sup> The Republic of China, also referred to as Taiwan or Chinese Taipei, is commonly included among donor countries, despite minor diplomatic recognition for its statehood in accordance with the One China policy.

## EXPERIENCE

Any serious analysis of the activities of emerging donors must include a detailed account of how they have tackled their own internal development issues. The perceived success or failure of these efforts will determine how much, or how little, their ideas will be accepted and included in shaping the development strategies of recipient countries.

While it is impossible to copy the exact development model from one country to another for obvious and various reasons. Partners can learn from each other how to cope with some problems, how to improve existing policies or what errors are avoidable. If truly built on the basis of partnership, this kind of cooperation allows both sides to exchange ideas and gain from their relations. This sort of horizontal South-South cooperation could be set against a vertical model of traditional North-South development assistance.

The position allowing our group of five emerging donors exchange of valuable ideas and practices has not come easily. It is the result of decades of modernization, social and economic change, enhanced by various international conditions, and carried at far different starting points and at each individual donors' own pace. We must also not forget these positive changes were achieved through the often unacknowledged hard work of their populations.

The varying extent pace of change can be seen when we consider the global position of our five donors over the last decades. In 1980 the scores on the Human Development Index (HDI)<sup>8</sup> for Thailand (0.503), India (0.369) and China (0.423) were below the global average (0.559). In 2013 for both Thailand and China the situation was reversed with scores of 0.722 and 0.719 against the global average score on HDI of 0.702 respectively. While India has yet to cross this

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<sup>8</sup> HDI was chosen from the spectrum of development indicators as it provides not only the economic information but also offers a broader picture of the welfare and living standards of citizens. Since its introduction in the 1990s, HDI has enjoyed growing popularity among international observers. The HDI scale ranges from 0.001 to 1.000.

benchmark, it has come a long way towards doing so, and reduced its shortfall by one-third (0.586 in 2013). It should come as no surprise as no surprise that the biggest shift in position is that of the PRC.

The chart clearly illustrates the importance of China and India in shaping the big pictures within their respective regions and how the regional HDI scores are essentially determined by these two giants.

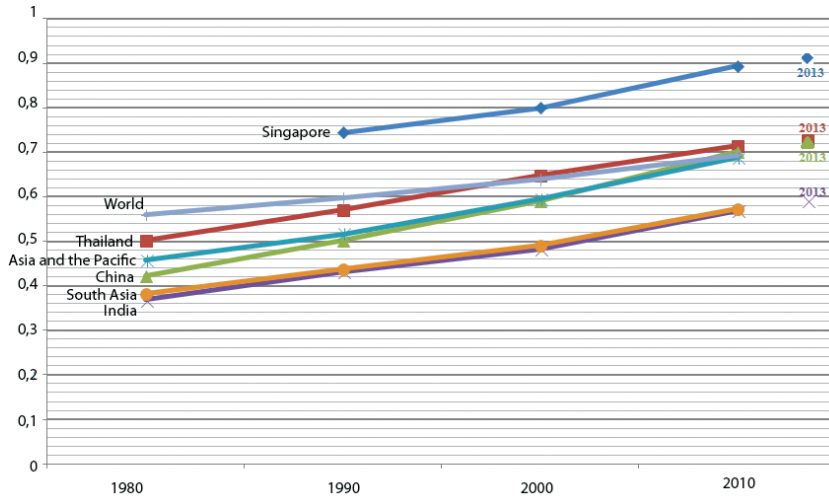


Chart 1. HDI positions 1980–2010.

Source: based on United Nations Development Programme 2014, pp. 164–167.

There is enormous diversity in the nature and level of social and economic development throughout South Asia, South East Asia and East Asia. This can be seen in the group of five under consideration. Singapore and Taiwan achieving **very high** score on the HDI; Thailand and the PRC – **high**, India – **medium**. The average HDI result of our group of five donors (0.771) surpasses the regional scores of South Asia (0.607), East Asia and the Pacific (0.710) as well as that of the World (0.711). We can also see this trend echoed when looking at Gross National Income per capita figures (group of emerging donors USD 30629; South Asia USD 5605; East Asia and Pacific USD 11499; the World USD 14301).

**Table 1.** Human Development Index and its components

		Human Deve- lopment Index (HDI)	Life expectancy at birth	Expected years of schooling	Mean years of schooling	Gross national income (GNI) per capita	GNI per capita rank minus HDI rank
	Country	Value	(years)	(years)	(years)	(2011 PPP \$)	
11	Singapore	0.912	83.0	15.4	10.6	76 628	-7
90	PRC	0.727	75.8	13.1	7.5	12 547	-7
93	Thailand	0.726	74.4	13.5	7.3	13 323	-13
130	India	0.609	68.0	11.7	5.4	5 497	-4
25*	Taiwan	0.882	79.8	16.2	-	45 148	
	East Asia and the Pacific	0.710	74.0	12.7	7.5	11 449	-
	South Asia	0.607	68.4	11.2	5.5	5 605	-
	World	0.711	71.5	12.2	7.9	14 301	-

Source: based on United Nations Development Programme 2015, pp. 208–211 and National Statistics, Republic of China (Taiwan), 2016. \* United Nations Development Programme does not present HDI for the ROC, as it is not an UN member, however local Statistical Bureau uses current methodology to calculate this index for Taiwan.

Since 2001 the international community have made great efforts to reach set Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) on a national, regional and global level. In the words of the UN Secretary, Ban Ki-Moon: 'MDGs helped to lift more than one billion people out of extreme poverty, to make inroads against hunger, to enable more girls to attend school than ever before and to protect our planet. They generated new and innovative partnerships, galvanized public opinion and showed the immense value of setting ambitious goals. By putting people and their immediate needs at the forefront, the MDGs reshaped decision-making in developed and developing countries alike'. Unfortunately, the best efforts of the international community were not enough to meet all the goals set in 2001. Despite the persistence of global economic and gender inequalities and the threats of armed conflict and climate change substantial progress has been made. The regional MDG achievements of South Asia, South East Asia and East Asia can be seen favourably when compared to those of Oceania or even Western Asia. The importance of our group of five emerging donors to this success is immediately apparent from available data (United Nations, 2015a, pp. 3–9; United Nations, 2015b; United Nations' webpage: United Nations Millennium Development Goals).

The MDG efforts gave us many success stories. For example in India, the PRC, Singapore and Thailand the *proportion of population below \$1.25 (PPP) per day* has dropped dramatically. In case of the PRC the figure plummeted from 60.7% in 1990 to 6.3% in 2011. In India decreased from 49.4% in 1994 to 23.6% in 2011. In Thailand it has was reduced from 11.6% to just 0.3% in the period of 1990–2010. There is no comparative data on Singapore.

Another Millennium target, to halve the *proportion of population below minimum level of dietary energy consumption*, also show our group's important contribution.

Change in percent of population deemed undernourished 1991–2015:

- Thailand – from 34.6% in 1991 to 7.4 in 2015;
- the PRC – from 23.9% in 1991 to 9.3% in 2015;
- India – from 23.7% in 1991 to 15.2% in 2015.

In the reduction of *under-five mortality rate* our group have made significant progress. Although only the PRC achieved the stated goal of

reducing this rate by two-thirds from 53.9 per 1000 live births in 1990 to 12.7/1000 in 2013. India, Singapore and Thailand had come very close to meeting this target by 2013 (last available data). India had reduced the figure from 125.9/1000 in 1990 to 52.7/1000 in 2013; Singapore from 7.7/1000 to 2.8/1000; and Thailand from 37.1/1000 to 13.1/1000.

We should also recognize the efforts of China, India and Thailand to improve access to clean drinking water (the access to clean water was not a problem in Singapore in 1990). Between 1990 and 2015 the percentage of population with an access to safe water sources grew: in China from 67% to 96%, in India from 71% to 94% and in Thailand from 87% to 98% (United Nations's webpage: Millennium Development Goals Indicators).

It is clear that the above data does not imply that China, India, Singapore and Thailand have already resolved all their social and economic problems. They still need to improve their performance in many areas, especially that of environmental sustainability (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China, United Nations System in China, 2013, pp. 58–59; Ministry of Foreign Affairs, People's Republic of China, United Nations System in China, 2015, pp. 9–10; Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, Government of India, 2015, pp. 16–22; Office of the National Economic and Development Board, 2010, p. 5–6, 10–12).

Perhaps unsurprisingly and because of their having the two World's largest populations the importance of China and India in the global MDG campaign cannot be overstated. Any success or failure has a proportionate effect on the global MDG figures.

The generally perceived positive outcomes of the MDG campaign has led to further cooperation within the international community and the setting up of 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Meeting this goals will require participation of both international and national stakeholders. While our group of five emerging donors will focus most of their efforts on resolving domestic development issues their cooperation with other players will provide the opportunity for sharing of experience, knowledge and development solutions at the same time allowing them to gain prestige and walk towards achieving various foreign policy objectives (UNDP's website: A new sustainable development agenda; United Nations' website: Sustainable Development Goals).



The most recent development assistance projects in Taiwan and Singapore were completed in the mid 1990s. Since 2003 Thailand has been paying off more of its loans than it has received in aid. This now also applies to the PRC since 2013. Although no longer considered major ODA recipients, the PRC and Thailand are still on the list of the DAC. Currently, only India still enjoys relatively large development assistance from abroad. Members of our group of five emerging donors have each gained a wealth of experience in the traditional aid mechanisms involved, which has allowed them to develop their own perspectives on how best to arrange, organize, and improve models of cooperation (OECD database: Aid (ODA) disbursements).

The fact that our group of five are deemed 'emerging donors' does not mean that they are 'new donors'. The roots of the PRC's and India's development programs are in the early 1950s. Some priorities, scale of involvement and institutions may have changed since that period but those two countries have been constantly engaged in the development of other countries and regions. Since that time there have been some periods when internal goals overshadowed the need for solidarity with Southern nations, however India and China are well known and longstanding donors for many recipients of ODA, especially in Asia. Also the ROC began its development assistance activity in the late 1950s / early 1960s, and, as with the two aforementioned countries, Taiwan's development programs have also evolved since that time. The earliest pro-development initiatives of Singapore and Thailand began in 1960s, although these were limited to technical cooperation. More frequent and advanced operations began when their roles as donors became more established in the 1990s (Woods, 2008, pp. 1–2; Manning, 2006, 371–373; Kragelund, 2008, pp. 565–576; Davies, 2007, p. 6; Chin, Frolic 2007, pp. 4–5; Behari, 1968, p. 105, 123–124; Smith, Yamashiro Fordelone, Zimmermann, 2010, p. 4; Walters, 1966; Goldman, 1965; Price, 2005, p. 11; Humphrey, 2011, p. 1; Walz, Ramachandran 2010, p. 4; Grimm, Humphrey, Lundsgaarde, John de Sousa, 2009, p. 23; Sharan, Campbell, Rubin, 2013, pp. 3–4; International Cooperation and Development Fund n.d., p. 4, International Cooperation and Development Fund's website; Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Republic of China (Taiwan), 2009,

pp. 23–25; Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Singapore, 2011, p. 1; Hong, 2011, p. 10; Singapore Cooperation Programme's website; Thailand International Development Cooperation Agency, 2009, pp. 1, 3).

The system of national development assistance differs from country to country with diverse internal players taking the lead role in administering and taking responsibility for the aid being offered. In the PRC the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Commerce play dominant roles, with the latter taking the lead. They are supported by the Export-Import Bank of China. India's aid is governed by the Ministry of External Affairs. Its subsidiary, the Development Partnership Administration, controls and administers two major aid programs: ITEC (Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation) and ICCR (Indian Council for Cultural Relations). The Ministry of Finance also plays a supporting role through the Export-Import Bank of India. Singapore delivers its aid through two major institutions: Singapore Cooperation Programme and Singapore Cooperation Enterprise. The former, taking the lion's share of responsibility, operates out of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, while the latter also enjoys the influence and support of the Ministry of Trade and Industry. In Taiwan the International Cooperation Fund, sponsored by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, is the major Taiwanese ODA player. It is supported in delivering their aid by the Export-Import Bank of the Republic of China. Two agencies are involved in governing ODA in Thailand: the Thailand International Development Cooperation Agency, under Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Neighbouring Countries Economic Development Cooperation Agency, under the Ministry of Finance (Davies, 2007, pp. 13–14; Asche, Schüller, 2008, p. 33; Cotterrell, Harmer, 2005, pp. 10–12; Rowlands, 2008, p. 10; Kjøllesdal, Welle-Strand, 2010, p. 6; Price, 2005, p. 5; Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, 2016a; Agrawal, 2007, pp. 3, 5–6 and 9; Sharan, Campbell, Rubin, 2013, pp. 5–6; Development Finance International Group, 2008a, p. 2; Katti, Chahoud, Kaushik, 2009, p. 1; Chaturvedi, 2008, pp. 26–28; Thailand International Development Cooperation Agency's website; United Nations Thailand, 2008; Development Finance International Group, 2008b, pp. 1–2; Thailand International Development Cooperation Agency, 2009, pp. 3, 9–11; Thailand Interna-

tional Development Cooperation Agency, UNDP n.d., p. 1; Hong, 2010, p. 13; Singapore Cooperation Enterprise's website; Development Finance International Group, 2008c, p. 1–2; International Cooperation and Development Fund n.d., p. 4).

## IDEAS

Two of the major principals that have underpinned almost all emerging donors activity are those of 'peaceful cooperation' and 'respect for sovereignty', which in practice means non-interference in internal affairs of other nations. Since being the milestone Bandung Conference Declaration of 1955, these principals have helped to shape the South-South Cooperation model based on international solidarity, mutual respect between development partners and an absence of aid conditionality (Harmer, Cotterrell, 2005, p. 11; Walz, Ramachandran, 2010, p. 3).

Like many other emerging donors our group of five are all strong advocates of this South-South cooperation model. For too long the traditional North-South model of ODA has been characterised by a paternalistic assumption that the recipients' role is passive one and they should gratefully accept the superior understanding of the North to resolve their problems.

In contrast to the traditional pattern, the South-South model requires equality between partners, whose cooperation can only succeed with the full and equal involvement of both sides. This mutuality of benefits and responsibilities represents a shift from the more traditional notion of aid as charity. The creation of a more level playing field allows players to further expand their areas of cooperation to those outside the framework of development aid, while the absence of clear lines (Rowlands, 2008, pp. 2, 6–7; Thailand International Development Cooperation Agency, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2009, pp. 4, 7–8).

Like many other nations, our group of five emerging donors have been critical of DAC members when considering the conditionality of assistance. The conditionality usually takes the form of influencing policy decisions made in the recipient country, significantly impacting both

domestic politics and the economy. This opposition to the conditionality has not excluded some of our group of five on placing some formal requirements before closing any cooperation deals. The long standing disputes between the PRC and the ROC have resulted in both limiting their aid cooperation to only these countries who formally accept them (PRC and ROC) as the sole representative of the Chinese nation (Price, 2005, p. 3; Information Office of the State Council, 2011; Information Office of the State Council, 2014; Development Finance International Group, 2008a, p. 6; Development Finance International Group, 2008b, p. 6; Development Finance International Group, 2008c, p. 5).

All of our group of five have some involvement with the DAC to a varying degree. At one end of the spectrum Thailand and Taiwan have embraced certain elements of DAC methodology which they combine with more home grown ideas. In contrast, China and India choose to limit their acceptance of DAC methodology to a minimum.

It could be said that our group of five display a more holistic approach to their aid cooperation, sometimes leading to criticism for blurring the lines between aid, foreign policy and security issues, when compared to 'focussed altruism' of the DAC's geopolitical agenda (Price, 2005, p. 3; Information Office of the State Council, 2011; Information Office of the State Council, 2014; Sharan, Campbell, Rubin, 2013, p. 6).

The choices made by our group of five by becoming a member of various international organizations and institutions reflect their individual priorities. These vary according to geopolitical interest and chosen specific areas of development activity.

It is hard to name one organisation that is crucial for the activity of all five examined emerging donor countries. The first choice would be the Asian Development Bank (ADB), which is a multilateral organisation consist of 67 members (48 regional and 19 non-regional). With an impressive budget of USD 27.17 billion and focus areas ranging from Social Development and Poverty to Information and Communications Technologies, the ADB is an important source of funding for many economic cooperation projects and programs. It is important to remember that ODA, disbursed mainly via the Asian Development Fund, is just one of

the financial pillars of ADB activity<sup>9</sup> (unlike ‘soft loans’, ‘hard loans’ are offered on commercial, non-concessional terms; there are also loans dedicated to the private sector projects with a ‘clear development impacts’). Big chunk of the ADB’s budget (USD 10.74 billion) is for co-financing projects and trust funds with various state and non-state agents<sup>10</sup>.

It is worth noting that our group of five only enjoy limited voting powers in the ADB and are not seen as major stakeholders, when compared to the more influential countries. The PRC wield 5.46% of voting power, India 5.37%, the ROC 1.17%, Thailand 1.39%, Singapore 0.57%, while Japan has 12.80% and the USA 12.71% (Asian Development Bank, 2016a, pp. 6–7; Asian Development Bank, 2016b; Asian Development Bank’s website).

Contrary to their stakes as minor players in the ADB, both India and the PRC are major players in two other relatively new institutions in the global landscape: the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) and the New Development Bank (NDB). The former, in operation since January 2016, brings together 57 founding members (37 regional and 20 non-regional), including the PRC, India, Thailand and Singapore, but excluding the ROC (in contrast with the ADB, Japan and the US are not engaged in the AIIB)<sup>11</sup>.

The latter, also still in its infancy, is a BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa) initiative in which voting powers are divided equally between the five countries (BRICS and its New Development Bank help China and India to present their global aspirations and fulfil their roles as pan-regional donors). The AIIB’s goal is to support ‘the development of infrastructure and other productive sectors in Asia’, while the NDB aims

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<sup>9</sup> In 2015 the sum of around USD 2.87 billion was administered through the Asian Development Fund. 87.5% of it was in form of loans and the remaining 12.5% was offered in grants.

<sup>10</sup> Out of USD 27.17 billion of ADB’s 2015 approved financial operations more than a quarter was related to private sector entities.

<sup>11</sup> As of late June 2016 the PRC have 29.90% of voting power within AIIB’s bodies, followed by India’s 8.63%, Thailand’s 1.74% and Singapore’s 0.57%. Beijing’s dominating influence over the AIIB diminish slightly when the remaining founding members ratify the AIIB’s statutory agreement. The voting power of each will further decrease as new countries decide to join the bank (check Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank 2016).

‘at addressing the needs of developing economies in today’s context and partner with them’ with its ‘vision to support and foster infrastructure and sustainable development initiatives in emerging economies.’ In each of these banks the authorized capital is USD 100 billion. It is too early to say how the first financial operations are progressing. It is highly probable that the AIIB and the NDB, are going to adopt the ADB’s pattern and divide its activities for soft loans (concessional transfers) and hard loans (Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank’s website; New Development Bank’s website).

Another significant organization which captures the attention of all international observers is the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN)<sup>12</sup>. It aims to ‘accelerate the economic growth, social progress and cultural development in the region’ in tandem with the promotion of regional peace and stability. In working towards its stated objectives the ASEAN has also much improved the environment for mutual assistance in the broader context. The involvement of our group of five in the ASEAN framework is as follows:

- Singapore and Thailand are full ASEAN members;
- although not members, India and the PRC participate in both the ASEAN Regional Forum<sup>13</sup> and the East Asia Summit<sup>14</sup>, each enjoying separate FTAs with the ASEAN;

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<sup>12</sup> The ASEAN members are: Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Viet Nam.

<sup>13</sup> The ASEAN Regional Forum is a dialogue initiative that focuses mainly on peace and security issues in the region and acts through political consultations. It consists of the ASEAN countries plus Australia, Bangladesh, Canada, Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, European Union, India, Japan, Mongolia, New Zealand, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, the PRC, Republic of Korea, Russia, Sri Lanka, Timor-Leste, the USA (ASEAN Secretariat 2011).

<sup>14</sup> ‘East Asia Summit is a unique Leaders-led forum of 18 countries of the Asia-Pacific region formed to further the objectives of regional peace, security and prosperity. It has evolved as a forum for strategic dialogue and cooperation on political, security and economic issues of common regional concern and plays an important role in the regional architecture. Established in 2005, EAS allows the principal players in the Asia-Pacific region to discuss issues of common interest and concern in an open and transparent manner at the highest level. The membership of EAS consists of ten ASEAN Member States (...), Australia, China, India, Japan, New Zealand, Republic of Korea, Rus-

- the PRC is also a part of the ASEAN+3<sup>15</sup>;
- the official diplomatic relationship between the ASEAN and the ROC is blocked by the Beijing's objections.

The Initiative for ASEAN Integration (IAI), with the aim to tackle existing development gap between Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Vietnam and other ASEAN members, has grown out of these other forums and is an example of the positive outlook for future improvements in development cooperation between the ASEAN nations and aid donor countries, including not only the EU but also emerging donors like the PRC and India (ASEAN's website).

The existence and influence of the APEC should not be ignored when looking at the broader picture. Despite its focus on rather traditional economic issues, like trade agreements and foreign investments, and its limited role in any development assistance planning, the APEC provides an additional political framework for further dialogue between its 21 members, including the PRC, the ROC, Singapore and Thailand. Throughout its 27 years in operation, the APEC has had to modify its neoliberal agenda to incorporate the concept of sustainability, human development as set out in the MDGs (APEC's website; Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation, 2016, pp. 3–5).

This brings us to the final two international bodies which have some influence over the scope of development assistance of our group of five. Since their inception during the Cold War the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM – established in 1955) and the Group of 77 (G-77 – established in 1964), have played important roles for fostering the cooperation between developing nations, roles which they continue to play facilitating ever

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sian Federation and the USA. EAS is an initiative of ASEAN and is based on the premise of the centrality of ASEAN' (Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India 2016b).

<sup>15</sup> ASEAN+3 is an international mechanism for cooperation between ASEAN nations and China, Japan, and the Republic of Korea. Its focuses on areas of politics and security; 'transnational crime; economic; finance; tourism; agriculture and forestry; energy; minerals; small and medium-sized enterprises; environment; rural development and poverty eradication; social welfare; youth; women; civil service; labour; culture and arts; information and media; education; science, technology, and innovation; and public health' (ASEAN Secretariat 2016).

closer South-South relations, providing opportunities to find common ground between all participants (120 – NAM and 134 – G-77) and initiating various bilateral projects. India, Thailand and Singapore are full members of both NAM and G-77, while the PRC is a member of the G-77 also participating in NAM summits as an observer (Nuclear Threat Initiative, 2016; The Group of 77 at the United Nations n.d.).

The development assistance offered by our group of five helps them to achieve various goals on an international level:

1. Prestige. The creation of a positive image as a responsible global power (the PRC and India) or as an important regional actor in the sorting out of 'neighbourhood' issues;
2. to enhance their national profile abroad whilst promoting the idea of South-South cooperation;
3. to further their own foreign policy,
4. to display solidarity with other societies and cultures;
5. to assist communities of its nationals living abroad;
6. to contain the unwanted problems migrating across its borders (e.g. transmittable diseases, political unrest);
7. to serve as an instrument of ongoing peace process (e.g. in Afghanistan).

## **MONEY**

Because of a diversity in understanding of what should be counted as development assistance, some differences may occur between emerging donors' own calculations and those based on DAC standards. However, for the purpose of this paper and methodological reasons, the most extreme anomalies were excluded.

When we consider the most recent data provided by Beijing we see that from 2010 to 2012 the PRC contributed around USD 14.41 billion in three types of foreign assistance: grants, interest-free loans and concessional loans. This figure breaks down to around SD 4.8 billion/year. The OECD figures for the single year (2014) estimate a figure of USD 3.4 billion. Despite the OECD figure being drastically lower than Beijing's, the Paris



based organization record this USD 3.4 billion as a historic high. In the case of India, domestic figures of between USD 1.3–1.6 billion have been recorded, which broadly agrees with the OECD figure of USD 1.4 billion, also its highest score to date (Information Office of the State Council, 2014; Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China, United Nations System in China, 2013, pp. 51–52; Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China, United Nations System in China, 2015, pp. 84–86; OECD, 2016, pp. 294, 296, 298; Kumar, 2015, p. 15; Sharan, Campbell, Rubin, 2013, p. 1; *The Logical Indian*, 2016; Mullen, 2013, p. 3).

The consistency of data given by Thailand and the ROC and this of the OECD is due to methodological cooperation. In the case of Thailand and the ROC we see a downward trend in the ODA offered between 2006 and 2014:

- 2006 – Taiwan net ODA USD 513 million, Thailand USD 73.73 million;
- 2014 – Taiwan net ODA USD 273.97 million; Thailand USD 68.97 million

(OECD database: Total flows by donor).

From data collected from the AidFlows database and Singapore Cooperation Programme's website we can only estimate the ODA figures for Singapore. Their yearly ODA figure is somewhere between USD 10–50 million/year:

- In 2014 Singapore contributed USD 16.3 million to the International Development Association<sup>16</sup>;
- Despite the lack of data for 2014 donations to the Asian Development Fund, we can find contributions totalling USD 10 million for the period 2006–2013;
- Between 2012–2015 Singapore supported Initiative for ASEAN Integration with the equivalent of USD 37.5 million.

These figures do not include bilateral donations and the cost of technical assistance offered (AidFlows database, Singapore Cooperation Programme's website).

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<sup>16</sup> AidFlows database suggests that there was no contribution in 2015 but in 2016 Singapore paid in USD 52 million to the International Development Association.

When put the contributions of our group of five emerging donors for the year 2014 into global context we can see a combined figure of around USD 7 billion/year, compared to the total USD 137 billion offered by the DAC members. The largest contributions are coming from: the USA – USD 33.09 billion, the United Kingdom – USD 19.31 billion, Germany – USD 16.57 billion, France – USD 10.62 billion and Japan – USD 9.27 billion (OECD database: Total flows by donor).

A common feature of our group of five, shared with many other emerging donors, is a preference for bilateral channels over the multilateral instruments of various international organizations.

Not being restricted by DAC standards, the form and nature of the development assistance offered by our group of five varies significantly from country to country. The PRC has the most developed range of instruments to deliver assistance:

- complete projects,
- goods and materials,
- technical cooperation and human resources development cooperation,
- dispatch of medical teams and volunteers,
- emergency humanitarian aid,
- debt reduction or exemption.

India's performance for the method of delivering aid is determined by the proximity of the recipients. To neighbouring countries India offers infrastructure and project assistance, while aid to other states consist mainly of training (of civil servants, engineers, and public-sector managers) and technical advice (feasibility studies and sending technical experts from India), disaster relief, other grant projects and, lines of credit (Information Office of the State Council, 2014; Chaturvedi, 2008, p. 32; Agrawal, 2007, p. 7; Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, 2016a).

The majority of Thai ODA comes in the form of concessional credits, while Singapore's bilateral aid is based more on technical assistance, including various scholarships for ASEAN citizens. The main forms of Taiwan's ODA are projects and technical assistance (Development Finance International Group, 2008b, pp. 2, 4; Thailand International Development Cooperation Agency, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2009, p. 1; Development

Finance International Group, 2008c, p. 4; Ministry of Education, Singapore, 2016).

Between 2010 to 2012 the PRC supported 121 countries, including 30 in Asia, 51 in Africa, nine in Oceania, 19 in Latin America and the Caribbean and 12 in Europe. Additionally, China also provided assistance to regional organizations such as the African Union or the ADB. They also donated capital (USD 300 million just in 2013) and extended soft loans (USD 1 billion) to the World Bank's International Development Association. The majority of the PRC's development assistance funds went to: Africa (51,8%) and Asia (30.5%), followed by Latin America and the Caribbean (8.4%), Oceania 4.2%, Europe 1.7% and Others 3.4% (Information Office of the State Council, 2014; Ministry of Foreign Affairs, People's Republic of China, United Nations System in China, 2015, p. 85).

India concentrates its development assistance mainly close to the home Asian environment: especially Afghanistan and Bhutan, but also Bangladesh, Maldives, Myanmar, Nepal and Sri Lanka. Although still not a top priority and low in volume, the aid relationship between India and Africa continues to grow. In the budget year 2012–2013 Indian training courses were made available to 161 partner countries (The Logical Indian, 2016; Agrawal, 2007, p. 5, 8; Katti, Chahoud, Kaushik, 2009, pp. 2–4; Chaturvedi, 2008, pp. 29–31; Sharan, Campbell, Rubin, 2013, p. 3; United Nations General Assembly, 2012, p. 9).

The main recipients of Thailand's ODA in 2014 were Laos and Cambodia. Singapore's preferred development partners are: ASEAN countries, India, China, Africa and 'friendly countries' (e.g. Commonwealth members). The last of our group of five, Taiwan, provide no accurate data as to the country by country breakdown of its total ODA figure. Despite its claims to prioritize Africa, we can see, from its aid agency website, that they have only support projects in 8 African nations, compared to assistance offered to 13 states in East Asia and Pacific and/or the 15 countries from Latin America and Caribbean (OECD's database: Aid (ODA) disbursements; Hong, 2010, pp. 5, 15; Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Singapore, 2014; Development Finance International Group, 2008c, pp. 3–4; International Cooperation and Development Fund's website; Kao, 2012, pp. 27–34).

## CONCLUSIONS

The contributions made by two giants in our group, the PRC and India, put those of other three in the shade, while their efforts are still dwarfed by those of the top five traditional donors. This should alley tears expressed by some commentators as any potential threat to the existing aid architecture. We should note that the figure in USD does not adequately value the contributions made by our group of five. While direct access to the available capital is of paramount importance the huge potential benefits to recipient countries through the exchange of knowledge and successful technologies from this part of the World must not be underestimated. Not least of these gains is the avoidance and/or preparedness for the many pitfalls in the process of social and economic modernization. While the ambitious Millennium Development Goals have not been fully realised, the last decades have seen remarkable progress in the areas of poverty and hunger, health care and education.

Another area in which the increasing influence by emerging donors may be of great benefit is that of advocacy. Their criticism of existing 'top down' model of development and their call for further respect for the sovereignty of recipients are arguably very healthy developments in the global development agenda.

The recognition of the value of all parties' contributions could go some way to addressing the problematic trust deficit which exist between all players on regional and global levels. To achieve this, both traditional and emerging donors should study their potential partners and, where possible, seek opportunities to strengthen their cooperation.

The coordination of donor activity, unfortunately still lacking in the Asia-Pacific region, could be much improved by further cooperation between the ASEAN and the ADB. The arrival of the AIIB and the NDB is also providing an additional welcome flow of capital as well bringing fresh perspective to regional aid mechanisms. All of these institutions acting together represent the possibility of a new dialogue forum, whose members can work together more closely to ensure an overall improvement in ODA management. Such a forum would provide:

1. To maximize the effect of all coordinated donor activities with its focus on regional LDCs;
2. The adoption of a more standardized methodology between emerging donors to facilitate closer coordination and aid management;
3. The promotion of dialogue and interchange of experience between regional DAC members and the emerging donor group.

The success of such an initiative could not only increase the efficiency of the ODA, but also have the desirable effect of increasing mutual trust and understanding in the region.

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