

21 Interregional Relations between North America and Africa

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ABSTRACT

This paper explores the extent of interregional cooperation between North America and Africa in the area of development. Given the relative lack of such relationships between regional organisations on the two continents, the paper uses quasi-interregionalism as a framework to instead explore relations between the United States and African regional organisations and similarly Canada and African regional organisations. Using primary documents and interviews, the paper also explores where and if cooperation between the US and Canada is evident in interactions with African regional entities. The results are marginal at this stage, but do point to the continuing rise in importance of African regional organisations like the African Union as increasingly prominent interlocutors.

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1 Introduction

Since the end of the Cold War, the burgeoning growth of relationships between regional organisations around the globe has broadened the focus of once eurocentric interregional studies (Söderbaum 2012). Organisations such as the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) have developed a wide range of international relationships, with other regional organisations and third countries too. Latin America is similarly going through a "new era" of regional integration (Mouline 2013). Africa also boasts a large number of regional organisations with many enjoying formal ties with other regional entities within the continent and beyond.

The purpose of this study is to explore the extent of interregional cooperation between North America and Africa. Are there any discernible trends? Is cooperation growing, remaining stable or increasing, and why? Such a proposition might strike the observer as counterintuitive, given the paucity of North American regional organisations with any relations beyond the continent. Outside of regional organisations with their antecedents in the Cold War (NATO, NORAD) and the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), strategic economic and political issues have taken on a bilateral focus in North America (Fredrik Söderbaum, 2014). For instance, recent focus has concerned the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) negotiations between the EU and the USA as well as a free trade agreement (FTA) with Canada and the EU. Far less has comparatively been said about interregional relationships, and especially those between North America and Africa.

In notable contrast, African regionalism is extensive – even to the point where some have considered the number of overlapping institutions and jurisdictions as a "spaghetti bowl" (Draper, Halleson and Alves 2007). Some fourteen regional economic communities (RECs) exist, despite decades-old legislation (from the former Organisation for African Unity, now African Union) to limit them to five. While efforts have been made to account for an African brand of regionalism (Bach 1999), and particularly the topical issue of regional economic integration, comparatively less analysis exists concerning African interregional relations beyond the continent.

Yet focus exclusively on region to region relations omits a range of other relationships to the detriment of understanding the broader nature of regionalism. An obvious example is the African Union (AU), which is engaged in comprehensive interregional relations with the EU but also maintains partnership agreements of varying depth with a host of third countries, including China, India and Korea, to name a few. Furthermore, in August 2014 the United States hosted the first "US-Africa Leaders Summit", an indication of not only Africa's renewed prominence on the international scene, but also of a willingness to engage it at a continental rather than bilateral level.

It is thus obvious that any narrow analytical approach risks missing what exists of North American-African interregionalism altogether. Exploring between sides of the Atlantic with dramatically different levels of integration will require a more varied definition of interregionalism. The starting point is the work of Hanggi (Hänggi 2006) and Aggarwal and Fogarty (Aggarwal & Fogarty 2004) and their respective attempts to create a typology of interregionalism. Of specific interest is Hanggi's "quasi interregionalism", or hybrid interregionalism, which denotes relationships between regional organisations and third countries (Hänggi 2006). This type of regionalism is by no mean a universally accepted category of interregionalism (Ruland 2006), yet it reflects a useful tool through which to analyse relations between regional organisations and third countries (Baert, Scaramagli, and Söderbaum 2014).

Furthermore, given the aforementioned lack of North American regional organisations engaged in trans-continental relationships, the study will instead look at the separate cases of the United States and Canada and their respective *development* cooperation with African regional organisations. Development in this context is considered an umbrella for all activities which relate directly or indirectly to development, including the ever increasing prominence of trade as a tool for development¹ as well as security as an enabler of development. The focus on development is also crucial because it takes into account the historical prominence that development aid played in framing North American relations with Africa, especially in the case of Canada. Finally, for the sake of parsimony, the focus is placed on governmental and inter-governmental organisations, not civil society groups or non-governmental organisations.

This study also seeks to investigate any cooperative links between Canada and the USA in Africa, in order to discern whether North American cooperation is privileged, even if outside the framework of any formal North American regional organisation. Cooperation could provide evidence of growing integration on both sides of the Atlantic basin. Semi-structured interviews have been conducted with officials from the USA (USAID) and Canada (DFATD) to better address the question of North American cooperation. It should also be noted that Mexico has not been considered in this study due to its far less prominent role in Africa (e.g. five embassies on the continent) (Mballa 2009).

Aside from a detailed exploration of instances of hybrid interregionalism, this study will also consider the motivations of actors such as Canada and the USA in seeking relationships at the interregional level in Africa (rather than bilateral), and the implications of such relationships on all parties involved. Building on Aggarwal and Fogarty and their explanation of the limits of EU-North American interregionalism (Aggarwal & Fogarty 2006), this study will therefore account for the difference in interregionalism taken as a **process** and interregionalism as a **policy strategy**. The latter reveals functional motivations, such as if programming is more efficient at the multilateral rather than bilateral level, serve as the prime drivers for North American engagement with African regional organisations. Likewise interregionalism as strategy also reveals regional organisation limitations, such as human resource capacities, and thus why countries such as the USA and Canada might in some instances prefer to channel programming bilaterally or even through third parties such as the African Development Bank (AfDB).

Interregionalism as process accounts for the effects of interregional relations on the parties involved. The act of engagement can bestow legitimacy and status on an organisation. For instance, why have western countries elected to support the African Union but exhibited far less interest in supporting its progenitor the Organization for African Unity (OAU)? Moreover interregional relations oblige parties to articulate interests, further contributing to their own identity and "actorness" (Baert et al. 2014). There is also a comparative dimension, assessing a regional organisation's relationships with various other actors to understand better the roots of its own actorness (Doidge 2007). Does, for example, the AU approach relations with the Canada in a different way than with the US?

Finally, this study represents an opportunity to "bring African in" (Frederik Söderbaum 2011) to a discussion of its interregional relations beyond their eurocentric roots. It will address the tendency to view "Africa" as a passive actor being acted upon (e.g. "The EU *in* Africa") (Brown 2012). This dated approach does not accurately reflect the robustness evident in some areas of African regionalism, particularly with respect to the African Union. As the same time we explore the meaning that others attribute to African regionalism. Do the United States and Canada view regional organisations as elements of a distinct category of

¹ The US-African Leaders summit in August 2014 had as its theme "Investing in the Next Generation" – a reflection of the prominence of trade and investment in current relations with Africa.

international relations (Doidge 2007), emblematic of changing ways of interaction and identity formation in Africa or simply functional conduits for the transmission of donor funding.

Case Studies

2 United States

2.1 U.S. Engagement with Africa

While relations with Africa remain relatively low on the list of foreign policy priorities for the United States, they have become increasingly important over the past decade. In terms of policy goals, engagement with the continent has shown continuity over the Clinton, Bush, and Obama administrations. Released in June 2012, the U.S. Strategy Toward Sub-Saharan Africa's four pillars include strengthening democratic institutions and spurring economic growth, trade and investment, advancing peace and security, and promoting opportunity and development, which frame American engagement with African actors. Across these policy areas, the horizontal objectives consist of engaging the youth, empowering marginalized groups and women, addressing the needs of fragile and post-conflict states, and working with the UN and other multilateral actors (White House 2012).

Over the past decade, decisions, which might have pointed toward an emerging continental approach toward Africa have tended to retain strong bilateral components. In 2006, the U.S. opened its diplomatic mission to the AU, which is housed in the US Embassy to Ethiopia. Four years later, the Annual US-AU High-Level Meeting was launched. The meeting has taken place four times since. The partnership between the African Union and the United States was further formalized in 2010 with an assistance agreement (U.S. Department of State 2011). The Mission to the African Union, however, lacks the necessary resources to propose and implement continent-wide strategies and programming (USAID Interview 2014).

Indeed, the US-Africa Leaders Summit, held in August 2014, or the Young African Leaders Initiative Network, and the AGOA negotiations still follow bilateral patterns in the programming and negotiations, with a limited role for the African Union or other regional organizations.

2.2 Regional Approaches

Under Secretary of State Clinton the role of development policy was elevated and put on a par with foreign and security policy within the "whole of government approach." Development policy is now more clearly identified by the U.S. as a foreign policy tool (Wolff 2010). Underlining this was Secretary of State Clinton's emphasis on "American know-how, American dollars, American values" (Wolff 2010) during an address at the Washington, DC Center for Global Development in January 2010. Still, the United States' engagement with the African continent remains largely bilateral. This is not specific to Africa but rather reflects American approaches since 83% of global American ODA disbursed in 2012 was allocated on a bilateral basis.

Sub-Saharan Africa has received more attention from the United State in recent years and official development assistance (ODA) disbursement to the region increased five-fold between 2001 and 2011, reaching nearly \$9 billion in 2011(Lundsgaarde 2013). Of the \$8,3 billion disbursed in 2013, around \$300 million were allocated for regional programming (OECD 2014, OECD.StatExtracts). While the numbers remain relatively low, a closer look at the United States' development policy and USAID's programming point to some budding

regional, if not continental, approaches and a growing recognition for the role of regional organizations on the continent. While cooperation with Africa's Regional Economic Communities (RECs) is not a stated strategic goal in the U.S. Strategy Toward Sub-Saharan Africa, it is presented as a horizontal approach under the "Spur Economic Growth, Trade, and Investment" and "Advance Peace and Security" pillars (White House 2012). In both policy areas, regional integration is a key tool to achieving the respective goals.

As mentioned above, thinking in Washington, DC is shifting toward "all of government approaches" or at least more inter-agency cooperation. As such, many of the programs discussed below, while falling under the mandate of USAID, are carried out in cooperation with the relevant departments such as the United States Trade Representative, the U.S. Department of Energy or the U.S. Department of Agriculture. USAID, however, serves to centralize most of the efforts toward the African continent. This is fitting since U.S. engagement efforts in Africa continue to be dominated by development cooperation. USAID programing in turn reflects broader political and mental shifts.

In addition to bilateral strategies, USAID has more or less far reaching regional strategies, depending on the program and region. The section below provides an overview of USAID's stated aims for regional approaches and programming in Africa.

According to a USAID representative, the past ten years have witnessed a shift in thinking about regional integration. Long seen as the purview of the European Union, the United States is now increasingly involved in building capacity for regional organizations (USAID Interview 2014). Indeed, in recent years USAID has given a more prominent role to regional organizations in its strategic planning. This change reflects both a belief that regional integration will further economic development and stability in Africa and an attempt to better integrate USAID and the State Department while more effectively harnessing American resources and expertise and cooperating with allies (Department of State 2010). The Department of State's First Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review published in 2010 recognizes the fact that despite its "organization around regional bureaus, the structures within those bureaus prioritize bilateral relationships, with strong country desks and deep links to bilateral embassies in the field" (Department of State 2010) and urges regional bureaus to assert themselves to address increasingly regional and transnational policy challenges. Regional bureaus are expected to "develop more effective regional strategies on core policy objectives, situate bilateral relationships in a regional context, and strengthen our engagement with regional institutions" (Department of State 2010).

On the African continent, regional programming is broken down in five bureaus, the Central African Regional (USAID/CA), the Sahel Regional, Southern African Regional (USAID/SA), the East African Regional (USAID/EA), and the West African Regional (USAID/WA), each with their own focus areas.

The Central Africa Regional focuses on the Congo Basin through USAID's Central Africa Regional Program for the Environment (CARPE). The program aims at supporting community and government efforts of resource management and land use planning. The regional mission covers the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Republic of Congo, Central African Republic (CAR), Cameroon, Gabon and Equatorial Guinea (USAID Central Africa Regional 2014).

The Sahel Regional was created to address the chronic vulnerability of the region. The Sahel Joint Planning Cell (JPC) attempts to bridge the gap between humanitarian and development activities by pooling resources and expertise (USAID Sahel Regional 2014).

The Southern Africa Regional, which started in 1995 and is headquartered in Pretoria, South Africa, covers Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia, and South Africa. Programming focuses on five

policy areas including agriculture and food security, democracy, human rights and governance, economic growth and trade, environment, and global health (USAID Southern Africa Regional 2014). Not surprisingly, cooperation with South Africa plays a significant role in the Southern Africa Regional's activities.

The East Africa Regional programming cover five policy areas, agriculture and food security, economic growth and trade, environment, global health, and crises and conflict, and spans the Great Lakes region of Burundi, Rwanda, Tanzania, and Uganda, and the Horn of Africa region that includes Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, and Somalia. Activities in the regional are further complemented by the Assistance Agreement for Comprehensive Regional Development with the East African Community (EAC), which aims at increasing regional economic integration and development (USAID East Africa Regional 2014, US Mission to the African Union 2012). The U.S. was also the first country to appoint an ambassador to the East African Community (EAC) and re-joined the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (Carson 2013).

USAID's West Africa Regional mission is based in Accra, Ghana. The program, which was originally based in Bamako, Mali, moved to Accra in 2003 and primarily aims at building capacity for the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). The West Africa Regional has among the most extensive regional programing, covering seven policy areas including agriculture and food security, clean and efficient energy, economic growth and trade, environment, global health, promoting peaceful political transitions, and working in crises and conflict. Formal cooperation agreements between the ECOWAS Commission and USAID have further consolidated the relationship between the two organizations (USAID West Africa Regional 2014, ECOWAS Commission 2007, 2012, 2014).

A short overview of USAID's five regional missions points to the varying depth and breadth of U.S.-Africa regional cooperation in Africa. While the East and West Africa Regional missions include formal cooperation frameworks with Regional Economic Communities (RECs), the countries included in the other regional missions are more a function of the policy areas covered than membership to a specific regional organization. A look at projects and policy areas will help differentiate regional approaches further.

2.3 Differing Policy Approaches

Agriculture, Food Security, and Trade

USAID activities in agriculture and food security count among the closest partnerships with regional organizations, Regional Economic Communities particularly. The RECs consist of the eight regional organizations recognized by the African Union, among them the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), East African Community (EAC), and the Southern African Development Community (SADC), with whom USAID regional missions partner. Most activities in this policy area fall under the Feed the Future program, which is the U.S. Government's global hunger and food security initiative. Feed the Future (FtF) is a global program, which combines bilateral and regional activities in Asia, Africa, and Central America. The bulk of the programming, however, is done in Africa, 11 national and 3 regional programs while FtF has three national and one regional program in both Asia and Central America (Feed the Future 2014).

On the African continent, FtF programming supports the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP). The CAADP is a continent-wide policy framework which lays out principles for the development and implementation of national agriculture policies of the member states. The CAADP is an instrument of the African Union's New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). In West, East, and South Africa, USAID supports the

respective RECs as they set out regional policies and priorities. Partnering with regional institutions is a "top priority for the U.S. Government" (U.S. Government Document 2011a). The decision to elevate agriculture and food security programming to the regional level is based on a recognition that challenges in this policy area are inherently regional. In addition, regional activities compliment bilateral programs in the various regions.

In West Africa, USAID/WA's aim to strengthen capacity for both ECOWAS and the West African Economic and Monetary Union (UEMOA) to formulate a broader framework for nationally focused trade and agriculture policies. ECOWAS is also a platform for discussion among member states and helps harmonize policies region-wide. USAID supports the implementation of Regional Agricultural Policy for West Africa (ECOWAP), which aims at "promoting strategic products for food sovereignty; promoting a policy environment conducive for regional agricultural development; and reducing food insecurity and promoting sustainable access to food." FtF activities are structured around these three priorities (U.S. Government Document 2011c). USAID also provides technical assistance to ECOWAS, with whom they work on the policy level. USAID's regional activities rest, in part, on the decision by ECOWAS member states to take a regional approach to the CAADP, giving ECOWAS a significant role on this area (USAID Interview 2015).

The FtF East African regional strategy supports both the COMESA and EAC. With the exception of Tanzania, the EAC member states² are also members of COMESA. USAID supports both organizations in achieving their goal of a single market and economic integration (U.S. Government Document 2011a). According to a USAID representative, activities in West and East Africa are more closely linked to regional strategies but USAID/SA is increasingly working with SADC and, given the overlapping memberships, with COMESA, which will be done in collaboration with USAID's East Africa mission (USAID Interview 2015, U.S. Government Document 2011b).

Although programming is done primarily in partnership with the respective RECs, USAID also engage with other policy-relevant regional actors such as the West and Central African Council for Agricultural Research and Development's (CORAF), whose board includes representatives of ECOWAS and the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), the Permanent Inter-State Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS), the Alliance for Commodity Trade in Eastern and Southern Africa (ACTESA), or the Association for Strengthening Agricultural Research in Eastern & Central Africa (ASARECA) (U.S. Government Document 2011c, USAID East Africa 2014).

Promoting economic growth through global and intra-regional trade is also high on the U.S. Government's Africa agenda. Given the place of agriculture in African economies, trade and agriculture programs are closely linked in USAID's three main regions, West, South, and East Africa. Indeed, USAID's trade work furthers and integrated FtF objectives. Regional trade hubs aim at increasing Africa's international competitiveness, bolstering intra-regional trade, and ensuring food security for African countries.

USAID's trade activities in West Africa are implemented through the West Africa Trade Hub in Accra, Ghana. Programming brings together a wide range of actors, including the ECOWAS and the UEMOA. Trade hubs also place the emphasis on working the regional private sector and public institutions at the national level. In West Africa, the trade hub helps farmers and firms meet quality standards and market requirements, and increase their productivity. USAID's regional mission also works with key regional private sector associations to ensure access to finance for projects and helps them negotiate and meet contractual obligations (USAID West Africa 2014). ECOWAS and USAID, who starting cooperating of the regional trade hub nine years ago, recently strengthened their

² Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, and Uganda claim membership to both the EAC and COMESA

cooperation to promote regional stability and improve the region's trade competitiveness (ECOWAS 2014). In Southern Africa, the USAID-supported Trade Hub works with the Southern African Development Community (SADC).

In East Africa, the U.S. Government introduced "Trade Africa" which aims to "double intraregional trade and increase the East African community's trade with the United States by 40 percent" (Carson 2013). The partnership between the U.S. and the five members of the East African Community (Burundi, Kenya, Tanzania, Rwanda, and Uganda) builds on a Trade and Investment Partnership signed in June 2012. Trade Africa should support the economic integration of the East African Community and increase the region's trade competitiveness (USAID Trade Africa 2014).

Energy, Health, and Security

On June 30, 2013 in Cape Town, South Africa, President Obama announced Power Africa, an initiative which aims to increase the number of people with access to power in sub-Saharan Africa. According to a USAID representative, Power Africa comes closest to a continental project with a continental "pot of money" (USAID Interview 2014). The initiative, however, will focus initially on with six African countries in West and East Africa (Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Liberia, Nigeria, and Tanzania). USAID's West Africa Regional is the only regional mission for whom power and clean energy was a defined area of work. Indeed, USAID had been providing support for regional energy projects in West Africa for over a decade, working with ECOWAS (ECOWAS 1999, ECOWAS 2000). Now in the framework of Power Africa, USAID partners with ECOWAS and the regional agencies, including the ECOWAS Regional Centre for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency (ECREEE) and the West Africa Power Pool (WAPP). USAID/WA coordinates technical assistance with donors, multilateral development banks and the private sector in the field of energy and supports the development of clean energy sources in the region (USAID West Africa 2014).

Similar to other initiatives, USAID's Global Health initiative is not Africa-specific. USAID health programming in Africa focuses on HIV/AIDS, nutrition, tuberculosis, maternal and child health, family planning and reproductive health. In Southern Africa and East Africa, USAID supports the East, Central & Southern Africa Health Community (ECSA). In West Africa, USAID partners with ECOWAS and supports the West African Health Organization (WAHO), an ECOWAS. They aim to harmonize Health Management Information System policies at the regional and country levels in all ECOWAS countries (USAID West Africa 2014).

In the security field, regional cooperation is much more limited. The United States have supported the African Union's efforts to establish a continent-wide Stand By Force and partner with the AU on broader prosperity, peace, and stability issues (Carson 2013, USAID 2010). USAID has cooperates with ECOWAS to strengthen peace and security in the region (RIP-ECOWAS 2014). Regional approaches in the areas of energy, health, and security are still tentative.

2.4 Trends and Observations

The past decade has seen a shift in USAID's approaches to development cooperation with a growing recognition of the importance of regional organizations. Although these steps remain tentative, together, the five regional missions cover the full range of USAID's policy areas. The First Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review lays out approaches for regional engagement in Asia, which could possibly be extended to Africa (US Department of State 2010). The document also foresees the creation of regional hubs, presumably building on existing regional USAID bureaus. Indeed, with the exception of South Asia, Africa is the only region for which regional integration is a priority for the American government (USAID

Interview 2014). Furthermore, USAID programming follows more functional than regional lines, which poses a challenge for the development of regional strategies.

Support of regional integration and regional organizations was for a long time seen by USAID as the European Union's area of expertise. In Africa, particularly, the EU has had a significant influence on the processes of region building (Bach 2013). Over the past ten years, USAID has started delivering more capacity building programs focused on regional organizations and regional integration. These activities are, among others, discussed with EU policy makers in the framework of USAID-EuropAid policy dialogues in an attempt to coordinate efforts. According to a USAID representative, however, these particular discussions do not rank very high on U.S. and the EU's respective agendas (USAID Interview 2014). While regional strategies have been developed for programming on agriculture, food security, and trade, the remaining three policy areas, energy, security, and health work with regional organizations on a more ad hoc basis.

According to Bach, "Regionalism refers to ideas or ideologies, programs, policies and goals that seek to transform an identified social space into a regional project. Since regionalism postulates the implementation of a program and the definition of a strategy, it is often associated with institution building or the conclusion of formal agreements" (Bach 2013). In the case of East and West Africa, USAID activities support and work with existing regional projects, namely the East African Community, made up of Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania, and Uganda, and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), comprised of 15 West African countries, USAID, however, does not systematically work with or build capacity for Regional Economic Communities (RECs), as recognized by the African Union. Programming seems to, at times, favor more policy-relevant groupings. In Central Africa, for instance, the regional mission which focuses on land management works with the Congo Basin countries rather than partnering with the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS). Since few USAID initiatives, other than Power Africa, are specific to the African continent, USAID seems to first identify issues and policy areas and then find the appropriate partners, which would be in line with the project-based approach of the organization.

As discussed on the previous sections, the degree to which USAID develops and implements regional strategies and partners with RECs or other regional bodies varies greatly between regions and policy areas. Doidge argues that "if actorness refers to the ability of an organization to purposively act in the international system, then *ipso facto* the strength of its actorness will dictate the types of activities it is able to undertake successfully" (Doidge 2007). In this context, the actorness, or lack thereof, of the various RECs likely plays into partnership and cooperation possibilities with USAID. Programming by the West Africa Regional is embedded in regional strategies undertaken by ECOWAS in a way that might not be possible in other, less regionally integrated, parts of the continent. Indeed, regionalism in Africa still focuses on ambitious agendas, which would require real transfers of sovereignty to the regional body and strong institutions. For Bach, this translates into a "sharp disconnect between highly ambitious federalist ambitions and poor transcription of stated ambitions on the ground" (Bach 2013). USAID's challenge in strengthening the regional bureaus could also be a function of this disconnect.

According to a USAID representative, the regional missions were created in part to make up for the decrease in the number of bilateral missions between the mid-1980s and mid-1990s (USAID Interview 2015). Indeed, budget considerations and attempts at rationalizing the use of resources and expertise have, in part, underpinned the move toward more regional approaches. Another the budget allocation process for the agency remains a challenge for the development of USAID's regional approach. While the First Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review demands that regional bureau spend "significant time and resources" (US Department of State 2010) to develop cooperation frameworks and strategies with

regional organizations, access to funds is limited. Indeed, funding, which is allocated in the annual budget and approved by the United States' Congress, remains largely bilateral (USAID Interview 2014). While regional missions have some autonomous funds, the amounts pale in comparison with allocations for bilateral aid. As mentioned above, regional programs were granted only \$300 million of the \$8.3 billion in official development assistance disbursed in 2013 for sub-Saharan Africa (OECD.StatExtracts). The slow development of regional or continental approaches toward Africa is in part linked to institutional constraints on American actors dealing with the continent.

Doidge's argument that "where qualitative differences are at their greatest, internally focused aspects of interregionalism are likely to be performed, while at the same time externally focused aspects will remain unachievable" (Doidge 2007) helps frame the inter-regional relations between the United States and Africa. Indeed, interactions between the U.S. and Africa are dominated by development cooperation. Inter-regionalism between the two therefore is more internally focused, with a focus on capacity building, rather than externally focused with an ability to influence global debates (Doidge 2007), which might be expected of two regions more on a par with one another. Furthermore, as Alcaro and Reilly, note North America, as a region, and the United States in particular, follow a more conservative inter-governmental path (Alcar and Reilly 2015). Interregional relations, therefore fall, at best, under a form of quasi- or hybrid inter-regionalism characterized by state-to-region relations.

3 Canada

3.1 Canadian Engagement with Africa

The following section will explore Canada's evolving approach to Africa and changing relations with African regional organisations. ODA funding will service as a key indicator of the tension between multilateral and bilateral streams in Canadian development and foreign policy. The analysis will examine trends, including any North American cooperation in Africa as well as the presence, or not, of an Atlantic area of cooperation. The idea of interregionalism as strategy will also be considered. Sources used include interviews with Canadian diplomats with Africa portfolios, official Government of Canada documents and secondary resources.

Canada's historic relationship with Africa has centred around development assistance and humanitarian aid. Trade between Canada and Africa has been comparatively less significant (Black 2004), reinforcing an aid-first agenda which has only recently begun to change through gradually increasing trade links and some conflict and security support programming. Canadian involvement in Africa had (and continues to be) channelled through a mix of bilateral and multilateral relationships, though the focus accorded to these relationships is shifting. For decades, Canada maintained roughly 15 embassies in Africa, finely balanced between francophone and anglophone countries reflecting the linguistic composition of the country. Multilateral relations were mostly channeled through the Commonwealth, UN and eventually la Francophonie. Conspicuously absent were relations with African regional entities such as the OAU, though this has changed in recent years.

Canada's approach to Africa has provided a canvas to project its (self-) image as a moral, "middle power", not only through the provision of aid but also the support of African independence movements since the 1960s and explicit backing from the 1970s of the struggle against white-minority regimes in Southern Africa (Elder 2013). This approach has had its champions – Nelson Mandela, for instance, made a special point of including Canada in the first group of countries he visited after his release from prison – but has also garnered criticism. Some pundits have deemed Canada's approach as one tied to an image of Africa

as an entity in need of charity, an "impoverished continent" (Akuffo 2013), allowing Canada to serve as a "helper state" (Ibid). "...Canadian policy towards Africa is about *us* – about our own moral self-affirmation and sense of collective identity and purpose – as it is about the African counties and people Canadians have engaged" (Black 2004). This self-interested approach has been abetted by the fickleness regarding Canada's Africa policy, which has moved up and down Canada's foreign policy agenda over the years (S. Brown 2013).

However, an increasing embracement of the development-trade nexus as a sustainable path to growth and alternative to an open-ended aid regime, coupled with a new and less apologetically instrumental approach to foreign policy under the current administration of Prime Minister Stephen Harper, has had some perceptible effects on just who Canada is interacting with on the continent. Specifically, the growing trade agenda has given new impetus for cooperation with Africa's regional economic communities (RECs). The case for hybrid interregionalism in Canada's relations with Africa starts there.

Institutional and Philosophical Change

The organisation of the government of Canada's foreign policy, aid and trade instruments has changed over time, reflecting a changing philosophy about the place of international development in Canada's foreign relations (Culpeper 2013). From 1968 to 2013, Canada's aid funding was channelled through CIDA, underlining at the time the importance given to development aid as a process in its own right. Some critics, however, considered the agency's de-coupling from foreign affairs and trade as an antiquated approach to the developing world and a perpetuation of the image of Africa as entity in need of charity. In 2013 CIDA was folded in to the newly christened Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development (DFATD). How much this amalgamation may lead to improved integration of foreign policy and development goals, as well as broadening the scope of aid funding, remains unknown at this early stage. There is, however, some reserved excitement by some within DFATD about a clearer strategic – political -- dimension to aid funding (DFATD interview 2015).

Linked to institutional change has been a gradual shift in philosophy about the purpose of aid, its distribution and the accountability surrounding it. This is likely a reflection of a larger "post-Washington Consensus", with a neo-liberal and trade oriented philosophy challenging the outcomes of traditional aid distribution. Greater interest in accountability has resulted in Canada's Official Development Assistance Accountability Act (ODAAA) and quasi-corporate funding mechanisms like the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) in the US. The 2005 Paris Declaration and the 2008 Accra Agenda for Action have also provided the principles for aid effectiveness, which guide Canadian policy (DFATD interview 2014).

Focus in some cases has also moved from "pure" aid to aid linked to security initiatives (development-security nexus) or trade (development-trade nexus). The case of Canadian funding distribution to Afghanistan, which from 2001 to 2011 cost approximately C\$11.3 billion (Akuffo 2013), is an example of a new form of "aid" tied mostly to security initiatives.

3.2 Regional Approaches

Canadian programming in Africa has fluctuated considerably over the decades, reflecting a pattern evident in other western countries and the EU, that is, initial aid enthusiasm in the post-colonial period, a subsequent diminution of support in the 1990s with the conclusion of the Cold War, followed by a spike in interest again in the early 2000s with the rise of a new wave of Africa-driven institutions, including the African Union and NEPAD.

These Canadian fluctuations can be demonstrated by exploring crucial endogenous factors: including political change and its effect on ODA funding levels and institutional changes in

Canada which have affected the way in which aid, trade and diplomatic relations with Africa are conducted, alongside shifting philosophies surrounding the purpose of aid.

Funding

Funding levels from Canada to Africa measured in terms of percentage of GDP and in real terms have ebbed and flowed since the beginning of the post-colonial period. Former prime minister and Nobel peace prize winner Lester Pearson chaired the UN expert committee which in 1969 decreed that 0.7% of GDP should be the target for ODA funding. Canada has never achieved this number, with aid in terms of GDP peaking in the 1970s and falling by a dramatic 33% in the mid-1990s following a wider government-wide cost-cutting programme championed by then Prime Minister Jean Chretien. By the start of the 21st century, Africa had swiftly returned to the agenda, though this time benefiting from the dynamism of a newer generation of leaders and home-grown institutions which served to challenge perceptions of the continent as a charity case. Canada embraced this change quickly, placing partnership with Africa on the G8 agenda for the first time at the Kananaskis Summit in 2002, and launching a C\$500 million "Canada Fund for Africa" to specifically support the goals posited by NEPAD for Africa. Finance Minister Paul Martin subsequently pledged to double Canadian aid over a five year period and increase the number of African countries prioritised globally by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) to 14 of 25 (C. Brown 2013).

The 2006 federal elections brought the Conservative party into power and another switch in focus from Africa to the Americas. Nevertheless, Prime Minister Stephen Harper honoured the previous administration's commitments and managed to make good on the promise to double Canadian aid (with the caveat that the original base amount had been recalculated (S. Brown 2013). Canada remains one of the most prominent donors of ODA in the world (6th ranked in the world in 2011).

More specifically, in terms of net ODA, Canada allocated US\$5.7 billion in 2011, making it the 6th largest DAC donor. The largest chunk of this aid (~40%) went to Sub-Saharan Africa, with four of the five largest recipients also stemming from the region (Department of Foreign Affairs 2012-13). Grants normally made up the highest percentage of aid with technical cooperation usually second. The distribution of funding is divided between bilateral and multilateral ODA. In 2012 roughly 29% of a total of CAD4.8 billion in funding went to multilateral sources (Department of Foreign Affairs 2012-13) - an explicit reminder that Canada's contribution to multilateral entities like regional organisations was of substantial importance.

Identifying hybrid/quasi interregionalism

As noted, Canadian programming is divided between bilateral and multilateral initiatives with more funding apportioned to the bilateral side at a ratio of approximately 3 to 1.3 A tension exists between the two with Canada's historical "good multilateral citizen" approach (Black 2004) juxtaposed with an increasing wish to prioritise bilateral projects driven by Canadian organisations (DFATD interview 2015). Analysis of Canada's 2013 ODA funding demonstrates at the bilateral level targeted at both development assistance and humanitarian assistance, with Tanzania and South Sudan being the largest recipients in each category respectively (Department of Foreign Affairs 2012-13).

³ Government of Canada ODA development assistance funding was around \$5 billion in 2012-13 with 4 billion allocated for bilateral projects and \$1.4 billion for multilateral. (DFATD 2012-13 pp: 13-14)

Canada's development assistance focus includes it top priority of maternal, newborn and child health (MNCH) (DFATD interview 2014), as well as AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria, and food security. Of course the interrelated nature of these focus areas means that funding is channelled through a variety of bilateral and multilateral channels. For instance, Canada's largest funding commitment to a multilateral organisation is for the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB and Malaria. Addressing these maladies in turn is deemed crucial for addressing the challenges of MNCH. For food security, funds have been channelled through UN's World Food Programme (WPF), making Canada the organisation's third largest donor. Last but not least, the G8/G7 has played a crucial role as a conduit for some of Canada's initiatives and the promotion of its development interests. The "Muskoka Initiative", launched at the G8 Summit in Canada in 2010, successfully committed its members to mobilise new funding of up to US\$5 billion in pursuit of Millennium Development Goal (MDG) targets especially related to MNCH (*Muskoka Declaration: Recovery and New Beginnings* 2010). In 2012 Canada also used the G8 New Alliance for Food and Nutrition Security initiative to pledge C\$219 million, with Ghana and Ethiopia the chief bilateral recipients.

At this stage, what does this programming say about the degree of hybrid or quasi interregional Canadian foreign policy? First, while Canadian multilateral development assistance funding targets a wide range of organisations, the vast majority of this funding goes to global institutions, rather than regional organisations. Moreover, much is aimed at direct or affiliated arms of the United Nations. Finding discernible patterns of Atlantic cooperation in this pattern of Canadian funding is not obvious beyond a broad cooperation with "like minded" states which happened to be situated along the Atlantic axis. Further parsing that broad assumption down to the level of specific North American coordination in Africa is unlikely, and not evident in the literature nor in the interviews.

However, one area of Canadian ODA programming where substantial funds do go towards regional entities is under the category of International Financial Institution (IFI) support. In fact, about half of assistance to multilateral organisations is destined for IFIs, though more than half of that is designated for World Bank initiatives (Department of Foreign Affairs, 2012–13). Beyond the World Bank, the leading recipients of Canadian funding are the Asian Development Bank (\$171 million) and the African Development Bank (\$147 million) – which shall be explored in more detail below.

Finally, there is of course non-ODA spending which also directly or indirectly links to Canada's development agenda and its multilateral relations in Africa. This is especially true when the scope of what is deemed aid is broadened to include the security-development nexus or the trade-development nexus. DFATD provides following four priorities in its engagement with Africa:

- Supporting development
- Promoting democracy, governance, human rights and the rule of law
- Promoting peace and security
- Promoting commercial and economic engagement

The support of development is overarching as evinced by the substantial amount of aforementioned ODA funding. With respect to the other stated priorities, such as democracy and human rights, funding stems from Canadian initiatives such as the 2010 "Counter-Terrorism Capacity Building Program" or else from Canadian funding contributed to larger international projects such as the "International Human Rights Training Program" or UNICEF's initiative to fight early and forced marriage (DFATD 2014a).

In promoting peace and security, Canada's support touches some bilateral plans, such as Tanzania's Peacekeeping Training Centre, but mostly multilateral efforts, including

contributions to several UN Trust Funds designated to support UN or African led initiatives most recently in Mali, Somalia and the Central African Republic (DFATD 2014b). There is also Canadian support for the regional organisation Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and its African-led International Support Mission to Mali (AFISMA), though funding is indirect and through the UN. A more direct relationship is evident with the African Union, where Canada was an early contributor to training and communication for the 2013 "Mission internationale de soutien à la Centrafrique sous conduite africaine" (MISCA) in the Central African Republic (Ibid). Prior to that CIDA aid money was used to support the African Standby Force (ASF) and the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA).

To conclude this section which seeks to explore links between Canadian funding in Africa and multilateral relationships with regional organisations, it is important to also highlight the Pan-Africa Regional Program which was the result of a 2012 rationalisation of DFATD programming in Africa. The focus of the PAP is economic growth and food security "through regional cooperation and economic integration, and it is closely aligned with AU and NEPAD priorities in these areas" (Department of Foreign Affairs Trade and Development). This commitment to working with the AU has led to notable support for the AU's Intra-African Trade Agenda and the concept of a Continental Free Trade Area.

AfDB and AU

Canada's most prominent relationships with regional entities in Africa are with the AfDB and the AU. The former has become an important conduit for Canadian funding aimed at larger regional initiatives such as the New Economic Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) Infrastructure Preparation Facility with C\$25 million committed over two phases of the project (Department of Foreign Affairs Trade and Development 2013).

Canada is in fact one of the biggest non-regional stakeholders in the Bank and is one of the Bank board's 20 members. It supported the Bank's 2010 General Capital increase with a commitment of C\$331 million, representing 4.9% of the burden share (African Development Bank). The bulk of that commitment is "callable", that is, it is a type of guarantee of liquidity which allows the Bank to borrow on the international market at low interest rates (DFATD interview 2015). The AfDB represents Canada's chief multilateral gateway to Africa along with the AU.

Returning to the AU, in 2015 there is only one direct funding agreement between it and Canada focussing on support for pillar 5 ("institutions, capacity building an communication") of the AU Commission's Strategic Plan for 2014-17 (African Union Commission, 2013). However Canada does also support the AU's Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) as a member of the Development Partners Task Team, contributing expertise in the establishment of an accountability framework and strengthening regional donor coordination (G8 Deauville Summit 2011). It should be added here that one interviewed Canadian diplomat based in Addis Ababa felt there was plenty of scope for future cooperation with the AU but it was not necessarily the most suited conduit for funding for a given area since its capacity was still in the progress of expanding (DFATD interview 2014).

3.3 Trends and Observations

The above effort to identify Canada's main partners in Africa and specifically its interactions with regional organisations leaves a mixed picture. The historic role of Canada in Africa has changed, reflecting not only institutional changes within Canada but also a changing consensus about engagement with Africa, manifested not only in the Millennium Development Goals, but also in the Africa-driven agenda of the AU, NEPAD and AfDB, among others. Shifting understandings of development, which have broadened to include

areas such as trade, security, good governance, democracy and the rule of law, have also affected programming.

What is not discernible from the figures, documents or interviews is unique North American cooperation in Africa either with respect to bilateral partners or regional organisations on the continent. Interviewees noted that good cooperation with the US existed in diplomatic fora, but as part of a larger set of "like minded" nations. For instance at the AfDB, the eight non-regional chairs maintain close relations, in particular the UK, France, USA and Canada (DFATD interview 2015). This might point to coordination between Atlantic partners, though at this stage it is not consciously deemed as such. At the AU, Canada cooperated with the USA within the joint partners group, including in the sub-committee forum comprised of mostly western donors seeking to exchange views on approaches to engaging the AU (DFATD interview 2014). Cooperation was also evident on Joint Programming Arrangements (JPA).

As for an Atlantic Space, again it is near impossible to state that a pattern of interaction based on geographic proximity was evident. Taking Canada's preeminent bilateral 2012-13 ODA funding recipients in Africa in order: Tanzania, Cote d'Ivoire and Ethiopia (2012-13 ODA funding), no such pattern can be surmised. The lack of a special Canada-USA approach to African issues further underlines just how tenuous quasi-interregional relations are between Africa and North America, let alone within the Atlantic Basin exclusively.

Interregionalism as a strategy?

It is evident that Canada has a "natural" interest in multilateralism as a means of conducting foreign and development policy stretching back decades. This of course makes quasi-interregionalism a distinct possibility, though as the ODA data clearly indicates, bilateral relations still remain predominant while most of the multilateral ties are with UN-related bodies rather than African. Yet multilateralism has also been of strategic interest since donor coordination is best done this way. Moreover regional organisations are identified by DFATD as often easier partners to work with since by their very nature they are set up to facilitate external funding.

There also remains the question of capacity for both Africa and Canada. For instance, the AU continues to grow both in size and ambition, but it is still a relatively young organisation. There are areas where funding is better targeted at the country level than the regional (DFATD interview 2015). Canada has also rationalised its own capacity in the area of development, cutting 15% of CIDA staff dealing with bilateral issues during the merger with the Department of Foreign Affairs in 2013. The Africa branch at DFATD has also been amalgamated into one larger entity with less than a dozen trade commissioners stationed in sub-Saharan Africa (as opposed, for example, to twenty trade commissioners at the Canadian High Commission to the UK alone) (DFATD interview 2015).

4 Conclusions

The results of our survey of North American and African interregional relations are mixed, at best. Having established a generous framework of hybrid or quasi interregionalism – which to many regionalism scholars is a contested concept in itself – we have been able to show a pattern of steadily growing relationships between the USA and some African regional organisations, particularly the AU. Exactly the same applies for Canada, which it could be argued has placed even more relative focus on regional entities in Africa or institutions such as the UN with interests on the continent.

In terms, however, of enhanced or formal North American cooperation in Africa, the results, at least in the field of development, are muted. As predicted, there is little or no North

American regionalism with a focus on Africa in development or even related areas such as trade, security or governance. This does not mean that the USA and Canada fail to coordinate in areas of mutual interest on the continent. In fact both are usually together as part of a wider group of "like minded nations" in international fora and, as shown, at the African Union joint partners group or the AfDB regional chairs grouping. Still, this ad hoc style does not represent anything more systematic for the moment.

Similarly, with respect to the existence of an Atlantic area, the results are inconclusive at best. None of the interviewed officials from the USA or Canada indicated a policy preference or trend for cooperation with Atlantic facing countries or regional organisations. No such pattern of interaction was discernible.

However, not everything is negative. Rapidly changing circumstances are creating new opportunities for cooperation. For one, there has been an inexorable growth in African regionalism, not only at the continental level in the African Union, but also at the level of RECS, with a demonstrated interest in continued regional integration. While the nation-state remains immutable in Africa, regionalism has never been stronger. This is particularly true about regional "actorness", with regional organisations increasingly perceived in Africa and out as attractive partners. The case of NEPAD is a telling one, with huge amounts of funding mobilised on a relatively quick time scale in the early 21st century as a response to the ambitions of a new generation of African leadership. The "Africa Rising" narrative, while contested in many circles, has also at least emboldened African actors, both bilateral and multilateral to take control of their own destiny (Akuffo 2012). This is evinced in the burgeoning growth of South-South relations and the perceived diminution of the importance of the global North. Intra- and interregionalism *as process* is evident not just through relationships between regional organisations on the continent but also in terms of the legitimacy and prestige interaction with actors such as the USA bestows on organisations like the AU and NEPAD.

In terms of interregionalism as strategy, this study has revealed the utilitarian attractiveness of hybrid or quasi interregional relations in Africa for both the USA and Canada. Though bilateral programming remains predominant, there is an increasing realisation that Africa has developed some strong and transparent home-grown institutions that in some instances provide a superior conduit for external funding. Again, the importance and attractiveness of the AU as a (positive) work in progress is underlined here.

Looking forward, it might be possible to see strategies akin to the EU's 'complex interregionalism.' Hardacre and Smith define 'complex interregionalism' as the result of the EU's policy of differentiation between levels of relations (Hardacre & Smith 2014). Indeed bilateral relations do not necessary stand in opposition to inter-regionalism but rather can coexist. The USA and Canada will likely continue to pursue both bilateral and regional avenues of cooperation depending of the strategic goals for engagement and the policy area.

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