

## India's rise as an emerging donor in Africa

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In spite of a change in nature and scale, India's external assistance programme is not new. Though traditionally limited to neighbouring countries like Nepal and Bhutan, recently India's development assistance has been extended to new destinations, Africa in particular. An ancient colony and a young democracy with a large rural population; some of India's states have a level of development similar to countries in sub-Saharan Africa. And India still remains a large beneficiary of foreign aid.

It is difficult to propose a unique methodology for analyzing the motivations behind Indian aid. Like for the rest of the aid, the primary objective of Indian aid is to express solidarity towards a lesser developed country. Tracing its roots in the non alignment movement and the historical conference of Bandung, Indian African cooperation is grounded on mutually shared sentiments of solidarity and anticolonialism. However, the historical and ethical grounds of this cooperation could be challenged with India's new found status as an emerging economy. Driven by its remarkable economic growth the country seeks new markets and new political allies. Often criticized as covert neo-colonialism, this voluntary cooperation could potentially release the aid receivers from the hierarchy established by aid flows emanating from the traditional donors who are often the ancient colonizers. Bourdieu recognizes the gift as a symbol of domination. If aid given in the form of grant is a mean to maintain the hierarchical status and the traditional superiority of the donors vis-à-vis the receivers, south south aid emanating from emerging countries is a means of overcoming the historical north south demarcation. Indian aid could be interpreted as a symbol of the place that India wishes to create for itself on the international platform. We have evoked earlier that the Indian ODA could be considered as a grant not conditioned to an immediate reciprocity. However, this analysis is open to arguments with India deriving economic benefits from the aid that it gives. An important part of the aid allocated by India is tied offering subsequent opportunities for the Indian companies. It could also be conditioned to economic exchanges, for example an access to natural resources of the receiving country (mines in Africa, hydroelectricity in Bhutan).

The evolution of Indian aid from ethical (socialism and the non alignment movement) to strategic is evident in Africa. The political interests arising from aid in the continent gives a rich panorama of vested Indian interests in the continent.