The London School of Economics and Political Science

Beyond ODA:
Chinese Way of Development Cooperation with Africa
The Case of Agriculture

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Declaration

I certify that the thesis I have presented for examination for the PhD degree of the London School of Economics and Political Science is solely my own work other than where I have clearly indicated that it is the work of others (in which case the extent of any work carried out jointly by me and any other person is clearly identified in it).

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Abstract

The international development cooperation landscape that has been largely dominated by the OECD-DAC members since the 1960s began to change in recent years with the 'emergence' and growing prominence of a group of 'new' development partners, many of which come from the Global South. Heated debate has since been going on around the so-called 'emerging donors' but much of that is flawed by its DAC-orientation, an almost exclusive focus on the ODA form of cooperation, as well as a lack of empirical evidence. Against this context, with an intent to further the current research on the Southern development partners, this thesis selects China, one of the most representative among them, and aims to investigate the Chinese 'development package model' through the case of its agricultural development cooperation policy and practice in Africa. Specifically, this thesis tries to explain how China's current 'package model' of development cooperation has been shaped by its own decades-long history of aid-giving and reforms. At the same time, it attempts to explore how exactly the 'package model' has been played out on the ground, and especially how the innovative commercial elements have been incorporated and utilized in China's agricultural development cooperation with Africa. Lastly, the thesis examines results of this new 'package model' of Chinese development cooperation so far provides a systematic explanation to why the 'implementation gap' exists in this specific policy issue.

Based on a detailed historical review, the thesis argues that China's own identity and experiences over the past decades have played a significant role in shaping its current model, and thus balances, to certain extent, the oft-seen 'DAC/Northern-centric' tendency of many in observing, judging and sometimes trying to assimilate the Chinese/Southern development cooperation model(s). The thesis also gives an in-depth treatment to the 'development package' model through the case of Chinese agricultural cooperation with Africa and compares that with the emerging trend of 'development PPP' in the Northern DAC community. It thus enriches the research on Southern development partners and that on development cooperation in general which both tend to focus almost exclusively on ODA. Furthermore, the thesis fills the gap of lack of empirical evidence in the existing literature by incorporating more project-level, fieldwork-based case studies on the Chinese/Southern development cooperation model(s). By doing so, the thesis also points out a series of practical problems in the implementation phase that otherwise may not be identified, and more importantly provides a systematic explanation for that 'implementation gap'.

From a theoretical perspective, in order to explain the abovementioned implementation challenges, this thesis adopts the ‘Public Policy Implementation (PPI)’ approach and establishes an analytical framework based on a ‘dialogue’ between the theoretical literature and the empirical data. It thus finds that three aspects – namely the policy *per se* that structures the implementation process, the policy implementer who are formally or informally mandated to carry out the policy, and the implementation environment wherein the policy is executed – have played a crucial and synergic role in accounting for the observed ‘implementation gap’ of Chinese agricultural cooperation policy in Africa; the ‘implementer’ factor, furthermore, has weighed more strongly in this regard given its potential role in remedying policy imperfections and responding to adverse environment. This ‘policy-implementer-environment’ framework may also serve as a useful analytical tool for analysing China’s development and foreign policy implementation in other fields in Africa and explaining the implementation results.

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Abbreviations

ATDC	Agriculture Technology Demonstration Centre
BSFLR	Bureau of State Farms and Land Reclamation
CAAIC	China-Africa Agriculture Investment Co. Ltd
CAADP	Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme
CACD	China-Africa Cotton Development Co. Ltd
CADFund	China-Africa Development Fund
CAIDC	China Agriculture International Development Co. Ltd
CDB	China Development Bank
CNADC	China National Agricultural Development Group Co. Ltd
CNFC	China National Fishery Co. Ltd
CSFAC	China State Farms Agribusiness Co. Ltd
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DPA	Direcção Provincial de Agricultura
ECA	Economic Commission for Africa
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FAOHB	Foreign Affair Office of Hubei Province
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
FOCAC	Forum on China-Africa Cooperation
M&A	Merger and Acquisition
MCT	Ministério de Ciência e Tecnologia
MINAG	Ministério de Agricultura
MOA	Ministry of Agriculture
MOC	Ministry of Commerce
MOF	Ministry of Finance
MOFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
NDRC	National Development and Reform Commission
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PPI	Public Policy Implementation
PPP	Public Private Partnership
PRC	People's Republic of China
SAE	State-owned Agricultural Enterprise
SOE	State-owned Enterprise
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development

Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1 Research Background

The past seven decades after the Second World War have witnessed the emergence and evolution, both for practice and research, of the so-called ‘development cooperation’[1] in the advanced world (‘the North’). Despite very widespread use of the term, there doesn’t seem to be a standard or strict definition for it[2]. Quite often, it is used almost as the synonym of ‘development assistance’ or ‘foreign aid’[3], though literally speaking, by ‘development cooperation’ it does not necessarily indicate an exclusion of other cooperation modalities as long as they could serve the development objectives.

Having said that, the widely presumed link between ‘development cooperation’ and ‘development assistance’ did not emerge out of nowhere, but has its own historical roots. In 1947 the US Secretary of State George C. Marshall launched the famous European Recovery Programme (1948–1952) whereby the US offered more than $12 billion to help rebuild the Western Europe and many of those recipient countries managed to recover from the ravages of war within a relatively short period of time (Department of State of the US, n.d.). The great success of the ‘Marshall Plan’ thus ignited considerable enthusiasm and expectation for the undertaking of helping other poorer countries in the world through external assistance (Führer, 1996). The US, again, took a lead in this process through President Truman’s ‘Point Four Programme’ proposed in 1949. A number of newly recovered European countries also started to join in the 1950s[4], alongside a series of development initiatives led by multilateral international organizations such as the UN, World Bank and the just established EEC (European Economic Community). In 1960, the Development Assistance Committee (DAC)[5], an agency that is with specific mandates to promote economic development and people’s welfare in the less-developed countries through providing development assistance, was created under the OECD. The DAC has since played a crucial role in guiding and coordinating the Northern development-related efforts, especially that of the Official Development Assistance (ODA) – and the term ‘development cooperation’ emerged and started to prevail roughly from that period of the 1960-70s.

The ODA by the DAC members, or ‘DAC donors’ as what they often call themselves, had maintained an upward trend through the decades, increasing by two times from about 40 $billion in 1960 to $120 billion in 2010 (Alonso, 2012). Particularly in the post-Cold War period, the Northern ODA used to constitute approximately 95% of all international aid for almost one decade (Manning, 2006), thus establishing itself a dominant position in the global aid landscape. Equally important, the DAC has over the years developed a rather complex system of standards, rules and norms in terms

[1] In practice, it is often interchangeable with ‘international development cooperation’, ‘international development’, or simply ‘development’.
[2] Attempts that are made to define the term could be seen, for instance, in Alonso and Glennie (2015) and Chandy (2011).
[3] Excluding military aid.
[4] A few European countries such as the UK and Netherlands started to provide development assistance even earlier before the 1950s, but mainly to their own colonies. See, for instance, van Soest (1978).
[5] Originally the agency was called Development Assistance Group, which was later reconstituted as Development Assistance Committee in 1961.

of providing ODA and some other development modalities (Manning, 2006; Bräutigam, 2010; Hynes and Scott, 2013), thereby further strengthening its leading status in the domain of international development cooperation.

However, despite the prominent role of the DAC donors, similar kinds of external development efforts offered by national states towards less developed countries, particularly through aid-giving, were just common in the rest of the world – although they may not be referred to as 'development cooperation'[6]. The single largest aid-giver outside the DAC community was surely the Soviet Union who had offered rather generous aid, including but not constrained to development assistance, to a large number of communist countries during the Cold War. In Asia, India, for instance, started to commit itself to development cooperation with other developing countries almost concurrently with its gaining independence, setting up a series of cooperation initiatives first with other Asian countries through the Asian Relations Conference in 1947 and 'Colombo Plan' in 1950, and then African countries during the Bandung Conference in 1955 (Chaturvedi et al., 2014). In a similar vein, China also started to provide foreign aid soon after the establishment of the PRC (People's Republic of China) in 1949, first to its Asian neighbours in the 1950s and then Africa after the Bandung Conference. Kuwait, one of the Gulf oil-producers, established the first of the Middle East development funds in 1961 (Turki, 2014). In Latin America, Brazil established its national system for international development cooperation in 1969, with the main aim to better coordinate foreign assistance it received itself but meanwhile also to provide technical assistance to other developing countries, particularly in Latin America and Africa (Vaz and Inoue, 2007). Even in Africa that usually served as the recipient end of development cooperation or foreign aid, the relatively better-off South African government also launched the Economic Cooperation Promotion Loan Fund in 1968 as a foreign policy instrument for various objectives (Besharati, 2013).

These abovementioned countries, apart from the Soviet Union giant, were largely from what is commonly understood as 'the South'; among other things, many of them shared a colonial or semi-colonial history, gained independence not long and still faced tremendous challenges of developing their own economies. Therefore, what they could possibly offer as external development assistance to other countries was rather limited; indeed many of them were back then (and for some even now) by themselves ODA recipients of the DAC donors. Their development cooperation and aid practice, often situated within the 'South-South Cooperation' framework, was thus largely incomparable to the DAC donors either in terms of volume or impacts. The development cooperation of the Southern countries was further reduced during the 1990s after the end of Cold War, when many of them shifted their focus back to their own domestic issues (Krugelund, 2008). Entering the new millennium, however, some of these Southern countries have gained an unprecedented momentum in economic growth, most notably the 'BRICS' (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) who are widely regarded as the forerunners among the developing world. With the growing economic strength then comes their increasing aspiration to have a greater say in the current international arena that is believed by them to be an 'unfair' system designed and dominated by the advanced countries. The 'development

[6] That said, this thesis still uses the term of 'development cooperation' in the context of non-DAC countries in order to form a dialogue between the two (DAC and non-DAC countries).

cooperation' has thus become one of the platforms for them to project the image as emerging powers both regionally and globally. Lula's presidency during the 2003-2010, for instance, has marked a 'big leap' of Brazilian development cooperation inspired by the so-called 'solidarity diplomacy' (Inoue and Vaz, 2012). The budget speech made by Indian Finance Minister in 2003 signified significant policy shift of India's international development cooperation policy whereby it proclaimed to 'provide relief to certain bilateral partners' on one hand and strengthen external support to other developing countries on the other (Government of India, 2003). But most eye-catching among all these Southern 'donors' was definitely China, whose development cooperation particularly characterised by its 'development package model' has attained an unprecedented level since the new millennium, and especially notable in Africa.

This 'emergence' of the so-called 'Southern donors', or 'Southern development partners' as referred to in this thesis, has triggered heated debate in the academia and meanwhile great concerns especially from the camp of traditional DAC donors (Chapter 1.2). The Southern models of development cooperation are clearly worth careful investigation for at least three reasons. First, from the perspective of *Southern development partners*, partly due to the almost hegemonic status of OECD-DAC donors in the international development landscape through the past few decades, the Southern practices as well as their thinking about development cooperation have been largely side-lined. Indeed, in a broader sense, the studies on the South and their role in world politics in general have been systematically ignored by traditional scholarship in the West for long time (Alden et al., 2010). The growing economic and political relevance of some key Southern countries finally grants them a chance to be seriously looked at and researched on. Thus, while the (to-varying-degree) distinctive modalities of the Southern development partners by no means guarantee greater effectiveness or efficiency, they still deserve careful and especially 'independent' research in the sense that the Southern actors are situated in their own historical trajectory and development logics instead of being treated simply as a subject of reference or comparison against the Northern models.

Second, for the *target countries of development cooperation*, the emergence of those less advanced but somehow more like-minded development partners from the South may imply great new opportunities, though surely not without any risks. It is, therefore, very much needed for them to have a clear understanding of the Southern actors' motives, mechanisms as well as implications, be that positive or negative, to their home development agenda. Lastly, in-depth studies on the Southern models of development cooperation are also valuable to *the traditional DAC donors*. After a half-century history, a critical question now confronting the DAC community is whether the DAC-led ODA model has reached its end. What is going to happen next – an inevitable reduction of ODA, further reforms on it, or even a 'revolution' of the current development cooperation architecture (Alonso, 2012)? The DAC has launched a series of dialogue with the Southern development partners with a declared view to boosting mutual understanding and learning; indeed, the OECD, for instance, has seemed to show signs of broadening its cooperation forms by using the PPP scheme (Chapter 1.2), and the World Bank, too, started to refocus on infrastructure financing in recent years, all of which may to some extent remind people of the Southern models. In this vein, the DAC community may find some good experiences or lessons to learn through more in-depth research on the Southern development partners.

1.2 Literature Review

Richard Manning (2006), the former chair of the OECD-DAC, was among the earliest ones who called attention to the phenomenon of the '(re-)emerging' non-DAC donors particularly since the 2000s. He divided them into four groups, namely non-DAC OECD members, non-OECD new EU members, Middle East and OPEC countries, and the most disparate, remaining ones which include quite a diversity of countries such as Venezuela, Chile, Brazil, South Africa, Russia, Malaysia, Thailand, as well as the much discussed two 'heavyweights', India and China. For the purpose of this thesis, I have grouped the non-DAC donors into three major categories. The first type is the *DAC-like countries* which often include those who are economically better off, and more importantly, willing to align their development cooperation (and aid) practice to the DAC principles (Zimmermann and Smith, 2011). The second type is the *Gulf Arab countries* who, due to a number of historical, geopolitical and religious reasons, stand distinctively from other non-DAC donors and form a separate development cooperation model (Villanger, 2007; Shushan and Marcoux, 2011; Momani and Ennis, 2012).

The last type of non-DAC donors is perhaps the most controversial and debated in the literature, which is also the focal point of the thesis –the *Southern development partners* – or, sometimes termed as 'providers of South-South Cooperation' (ECOSOC of the UN, 2008; Zimmermann and Smith, 2010). As already roughly defined earlier, this group includes development partners from the commonly understood 'Global South', who are often by themselves still largely developing countries and facing a number of development challenges; some of them are still on the aid-recipient list of the DAC-donors. Typical examples include, for instance, Brazil (Vaz and Inoue, 2007; Xalma, 2010; Inoue and Vaz, 2012; Burges, 2014; Cabral et al., 2014; Robledo, 2015), India (Agrawal 2007; McCormick 2008; Chaturvedi, 2008 and 2012; Chanana 2009 and 2010; Fuchs and Vadlamannati, 2013; Chaturvedi et al., 2014), South Africa (Wolfe et al., 2008; Grimm, 2011; Vickers, 2012; Besharati, 2013; Grobbelaar, 2014), Turkey (Kulaklikaya and Nurdun, 2010, Özkan and Akgün, 2010; Rudincová, 2014; Hausmann and Lundsgaarde, 2015), and China (Lancaster, 2007; Chin and Frolic, 2007; Woods, 2008; McCormick, 2008; Opoku-Mensah, 2009; Tan-Mullins et al., 2010; Bräutigam, 2011; Haan, 2011; Lengauer, 2011; Chin, 2012; Dreher and Fuchs, 2015; Zhang et al., 2015; Dreher et al., 2016; Kilama, 2016). The review discussion that follows will focus primarily on the Southern development partners.

Despite a rapid increase in the past decade or so, aid provided by non-DAC donors in relative terms, is still rather limited. In 2008, for instance, the external development assistance of the non-DAC donors in total averaged roughly at $12 billion, representing only about 10% of the DAC donors in the same year; the relative weight of the Southern development partners, furthermore, is even less (Smith et al., 2010; OECD.Stat, 2008). It was expected that DAC aid would still be the dominant source of concessional official finance for a good time to come (Manning, 2006). Therefore, it is not really the *size* but rather the *modalities* of the non-DAC donors – the Southern development partners in particular – that have triggered the heated debate in the academia (Manning, 2006; Naim, 2007; Woods, 2008; Kragelund, 2008; Six, 2009; Paulo and Reisen, 2010; Kim and Lightfoot, 2011; Hann, 2011; Zimmermann and Smith, 2011; Chandy and Kharas, 2011 and 2015; Davies, 2011; Sato et al., 2011; Chin and Quadir, 2012; Mwase and Yang, 2012; Quadir, 2013; Roussel, 2013; Kondoh, 2015; Kilama, 2016). While some of the researchers advocate that the distinct models of Southern development partners provide new alternatives and thus open policy space for developing countries in need of foreign assistance, many, especially those from the DAC community, have shown great concern about this new phenomenon and worry that their established rules and standards may be endangered. Specifically, some of the most notable differences between Southern development partners and their DAC counterparts are discussed as follows.

First, in terms of *geographical distribution*, the Southern development partners have provided most of their development aid to the UN-identified Least Developed Countries (LDCs), which demonstrates a similar pattern to the DAC donors. But different from the latter, the Southern development partners normally prioritise the LDCs that are in close proximity to themselves, rather than extend to a global reach as many of the DAC donors do. For instance, India gave more than 85% of aid to its (South) Asian neighbours and Turkey around 83% to its (Central and South) Asian friends, whilst Brazil distributed the largest part of aid to its Latin American neighbours and a few Lusophone African countries who shared a common colonial past (ECOSOC of the UN, 2008). Exception of that is China whose aid has represented more a global allocation compared to other development actors from the South, with Africa receiving more than half (51.8%) of the Chinese aid, followed by Asia (30.5%), Latin America and the Caribbean (8.4%), among others (State Council of the PRC, 2014).

As regards *targeted sectors*, the Southern development partners have distributed a large proportion of their aid finance to economic sectors (economic infrastructure and productive sectors) compared to their OECD-DAC counterparts who have put more emphasis on social sectors (or social infrastructure)[7] (Kragelund, 2008 and 2010; Walz and Ramachandran, 2011; Mwase and Yang, 2012). This feature is particularly visible in the case of China and India[8]. Take the former for example, about 50.4% of China's total aid funds was spent on economic sectors (44.8% in economic infrastructure and 5.6% in agricultural and industrial sectors) and 27.6% of that in social sectors during the period 2010–2012 (State Council of the PRC, 2014); whereas the DAC donors disbursed 23.9% of their ODA to economic sectors (16.6%

[7] According to the OECD-DAC categorization and definition (China, for instance, has adopted a similar system as seen in its 'White Paper on Foreign Aid', 2011 and 2014), aid to *economic infrastructure* indicates assistance for networks, utilities and services that facilitate economic activity, including such as energy, transportation and communications; aid to *social infrastructure* refers to efforts to develop the human resource potential and enhance living conditions in aid recipient countries, including such as education, health and population, water supply, sanitation and sewerage; aid to *productive sectors* include agriculture, fishing and forestry, industry, mining and construction, trade and tourism. Other major categories include such as assistance to *multi-sectors/cross-cutting sectors* that are often with a concentration on the environment, gender projects and urban and rural development, *action relating to debt* such as debt forgiveness, *humanitarian aid* and unspecified aid (OECD.Stat, 2012).

[8] This is to a lesser extent the case for other Southern development partners. For example, Brazil also puts much emphasis on social sector (Inoue and Vaz, 2012); South Africa gives a special focus on peace-building and post-conflict development (Grobbelaar, 2014) and Turkey on humanitarian aid (Hausmann and Lundsgaarde, 2015).

in economic infrastructure and 7.2% in productive sectors) and 41.3% in social sectors in the year of 2012 (OECD.Stat, 2012).

Similar to DAC donors, grants and loans are also widely used (e.g. in China, India, South Africa, Turkey) as the main *financing methods*, or begin to emerge as a new trend (e.g. in Brazil) in the development partner countries from the South. That said, the proportion of the two (grants versus loans) in total aid differs greatly between the DAC and Southern actors. While grants have represented more than 80% of the total ODA among DAC donors in the past decade (OECD.Stat, 2015), the figure is about 36.5% for China during 2012–14 (State Council of the PRC, 2014), and only 4% for India (in terms of its aid to Africa) during 2000–2014 (Chaturvedi et al., 2014). Furthermore, the concessional terms of the loans provided respectively by the DAC and Southern actors are also quite different from each other (see 'concessionality' below).

Regarding *aid forms*, while 'project aid' is still overwhelmingly utilized among the Southern development partners, the DAC community has, since the 1980s, diverted increasing attention to the so-called 'programme aid' or 'PBAs'[9] as referred to in recent years, and particularly 'budget support' which stands as a major component of the former (Camara, 2004). In 2015, for example, general programme aid represented 8% of DAC donors' total ODA in Africa (OECD, 2017), whereas the Southern development partners normally do not provide programme aid to other developing countries (ECOSOC of the UN, 2008). Exceptions may be seen in the use of budget support by South Africa and India, which however remains at a very limited scale in both cases (Besharati, 2013; ECOSOC of the UN, 2008).

Meanwhile, different from DAC donors, technical assistance has traditionally occupied a special position in the aid practice of the Southern development partners, especially during the earlier decades (1960-90s) when they had a relatively weaker financial strengths. For instance, India's famous ITEC (Indian Technical & Economic Cooperation) programme which was launched in 1964, remains as an integral part of Indian contemporary aid. About 11 million USD were spent on ITEC every year and the total disbursement mounted to almost 60% of the overall expenditure of Indian Ministry of External Affairs during 2012–13 (Chaturvedi et al., 2014). Brazil, as well, has had the tradition of providing technical assistance to other developing countries for decades, especially since 1978 when the Buenos Aires Action Plan was approved, whereby the TCDC (Technician Cooperation among Developing Countries) concept was increasingly integrated into Brazilian domestic system (Vaz and Inoue, 2007).

Apart from some of the general features and differences as mentioned above, a few other issues, particularly those around concessionality, conditionality and the typing status of aid, have made the Southern modalities of development cooperation even more controversial.

[9] *PBAs*, short for 'Programme-Based Approaches', are defined as 'a way of engaging in development co-operation based on the principles of co-ordinated support for a locally-owned programme of development, such as a national development strategy, a sector programme, a thematic programme or a programme of a specific organisation' (OECD-DAC, 2007).

To 'ensure the benefits of the recipient developing countries', the DAC stipulates that ODA must be 'concessional in character' and uses 'grant element'[10] as a yardstick to measure the *consessionality* of the ODA of DAC members (OECD, 2008). A minimum grant element of 25% is required for a loan to be qualified as ODA, calculated against a 10% reference rate of interest/discount that was adopted since the 1970s (Hynes and Scott, 2013). To LDCs, furthermore, the DAC demands even softer terms that the ODA should be essentially in the form of grants and as a minimum, the average grant element of all commitments from a given donor should either be at least 86% to each LDC over a period of three years, or at least 90% annually for the LDCs as a group (OECD, 1978). In effect, the average grant element of total ODA by DAC donors is almost 96%[11] (OECD, 2016). By contrast, there isn't a strict stipulation among Southern development partners on the concessionality of their financial flows to the recipient countries. They apply varying rates of interest for their loans extended, which are often lower than market terms, but still appear 'less concessional' than the DAC donors if measured by the OECD 'grant element' criteria. For instance, the grant element of Chinese loans is about 75.1% for the zero-interest government loan and between 24.2-67.6% for concessional loans provided by China's EXIM Bank; the figure for India is around 53.1-56.5%, and Turkey 26.6-80.8% (ECOSOC of the UN, 2008).

Conditionality is another long-held principle of the DAC donors particularly since the debt crisis in the 1980s. The ODA has become conditional on a wide range of economic, political, social and environmental policies, such as macroeconomic stabilisation, privatization, 'good governance' and related reforms (Mold, 2009). And despite the Paris Declaration emphasis on 'ownership', the DAC donors seem to have adopted an increasingly hands-on approach (Zimmermann and Smith, 2011). Many of the Southern development partners, on the other hand, do not usually attach such economic or political conditions when giving aid to other developing countries, or at least to a far less extent than their DAC counterparts. China stands out greatly in this regard for its firmly held non-interference position (Tan-Mullins et al., 2010). While the Southern actors usually invoke the core principles for South-South Cooperation as the rationale for their non-conditionality practice[12], it is more often than not interpreted (particularly by the Northern donors) as merely a sort of political rhetoric (for commercial benefits) rather than being taken seriously.

Another important and hotly debated issue around development cooperation provided by Southern countries is *tied aid*, and more broadly, the *'development package'* model that often combines aid with other economic activities such as trade and

[10] *Grant element* is a measure of the concessionality of a loan, expressed as the percentage by which the present value of the expected stream of repayments falls short of the repayments that would have been generated at a given reference rate of interest (OECD-DAC, 2013). For the exact methods of how to calculate the 'grant element' of certain ODA flows, see OECD-DAC (2013).

[11] With only a few exceptions below 90% including three of the largest donors, France (85.6%), Germany (83.6%) and Japan (89.1%).

[12] For instance, the principles of 'respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all nations; abstention from intervention or interference in the internal affairs of another country; abstention by any country from exerting pressures on other countries' (Final Communiqué of the Asian-African conference of Bandung, 1955); and that of 'strict observance of national sovereignty, economic independence, equal rights and non-interference in domestic affairs of nations, irrespective of their size, level of development and social and economic systems' (Buenos Aires Plan of Action, 1978).

investment. Tied aid[13] is not formally prohibited – though subject to a series of rules concerning, for instance, the concessionality level[14], the target countries as well as the developmental relevance – and used to be widely practiced among DAC donors for decades. However, given the common belief in the cost-inefficiency (compared to procurement through open bidding) and reduced effectiveness (esp. concerning 'ownership' and developmental impacts) of tied aid, the OECD-DAC made a Recommendation in 2001 for the donors to untie their ODA, especially that towards the LDCs. By the year of 2007, the proportion of fully untied bilateral aid of DAC donors rose from 46% in 1999-2001 to 76%, and for LDCs from 57% to 83% (Clay et al., 2009). In parallel with the efforts made by the DAC community – regardless of evident limitation at the same time[15]– many of the Southern development partners, however, still widely and frequently use tied aid. This has inevitably evoked great resentments and criticisms from the DAC donors (Manning, 2006), though the actual effects of that remain largely unevaluated from either an efficiency or effectiveness perspective (Woods, 2008; Clay et al., 2009).

Closely linked to tied aid, aid provided by Southern development partners is also often associated with their broader economic interactions with the recipient countries (Manning, 2006; Alden, 2007; Woods, 2008; Collier, 2008; Paulo and Reisen, 2010; Kragelund, 2010; Mwase and Yang, 2012). In contrast with the DAC donors who always prefer to deal with ODA in a very independent, 'neutral' way, aid of Southern actors is provided often as only a part of a much larger, more comprehensive economic cooperation package that often encompasses ambitious trade and investment pledges, and is believed as having 'taken account of wider political and economic interests' (Manning, 2006). In fact, this has constituted a marked feature of the way the Southern development partners engage with Africa – particularly typical in the case of China and India (Goldstein et al., 2006), and to a lesser extent, Brazil, Turkey and South Africa – with a often claimed objective for mutual benefits. This, is referred to as 'development package' in this thesis, indicating the mix of cooperation modalities with a clear view to achieving development objectives for both recipient countries and the development partner countries themselves.

To sum up, there are several shortcomings concerning the existing research on the Southern development partners. The first one is the 'DAC-centred' tendency that is often seen in the literature. Given the long and rich practice of the Northern countries in development cooperation – especially the dominant position of DAC aid and the established status of DAC rules and norms in the recent decades – many of the

[13] *Tied aid*, according to the OECD-DAC, indicates 'official grants or loans where procurement of the goods or services involved is limited to the donor country or to a group of countries which does not include substantially all aid recipient countries' (OECD, 2016).

[14] An export credit is considered to be concessional if it has a grant element of at least 35% (50% for least-developed countries) and the discount rate for calculating the grant element of that was according to the market-related Commercial Interest Reference Rates (CIRR) rather than the 10% benchmark rate of interest as used for ODA (ECOSOC of the UN, 2008).

[15] According to Clay et al. (2009), technical cooperation and food aid were excluded from the Recommendation and both remain significant 'gray areas', with 30% and at least 50% respectively still reported as tied; meanwhile, there are large variations in the untying status of different DAC donors (e.g. the US and Japanese ODA were still heavily tied) and high level of non-reporting for technical cooperation and likely tied sectors (e.g. infrastructure, transport and energy); besides, statistical evidence also implied a considerable element of intended or unintended *de facto* tying that still widely exists in practice.

existing research tend to observe and judge the Southern actors through the lens of the DAC model. The Southern development partners are labelled as 'donors', which is influenced by DAC's accustomed mentality of the 'donor-recipient' logic. They are regarded as 'emerging' or 'new' actors due to DAC donors' more powerful and visible role in the international aid landscape. Their modalities of development cooperation – such as the financing methods, concessionality, conditionality and tying status of aid reviewed above – are considered problematic and even 'rogue' for the obvious departure from the established DAC standards (Naim, 2007; Paulo and Reisen, 2010; Walz and Ramachandran, 2011). They are hence invited to different sorts of 'dialogue', which however are often with an inexplicit intension of the DAC trying to converge the Southern actors and the underlying belief that DAC principles 'should be maintained' (Manning, 2006). Some scholars have further explored why it has been difficult for the Southern development partners to converge to the DAC guidelines (Kondoh, 2015), and how possible – for instance, through policy dialogue and peer review – to achieve that goal (Paulo and Reisen, 2010).

In short, the development cooperation models of the Southern actors are not really judged by what they are, but rather, what they are not (Kim and Lightfoot, 2011); and this is so even when those rules and norms are neither fully complied by the DAC members themselves (Woods, 2008; Tan-Mullins et al., 2010), nor have them been proved more productive or beneficial to recipient countries than the Southern models. Accordingly, what is relatively lacking is research that is conducted from more South-oriented perspectives, that is aimed to explore, for instance, how the contemporary modalities of development cooperation have been shaped by the Southern actors' respective histories and experiences in the past decades. To give some examples: the widely used financing method of loans in India's current external development cooperation is believed to have much to do with the influence of its own aid-receiving past, wherein the proportion of loans in the total aid received by India remained high and in fact increased from 81% in 1981-1982 to 93% in 2010-2011 (Chaturvedi, 2012); and the principles of non-conditionality of Brazilian development cooperation was very much informed by the emerging ideals of horizontality in the 1970-80s as well as its own experiences as an aid recipient (Leite et al., 2014). Therefore, as some have rightly pointed out, there may be some real obstacles to the mutual understanding between the DAC donors and Southern development partners, and it may thus be more realistic to have differentiated standards (Chandy and Kharas, 2011).

Second, the existing literature on the Southern development partners has put an almost exclusive focus on ODA; indeed even the studies on development cooperation in a broader sense also reflect the tendency of an overconcentration on development aid (Chandy, 2011; Currie-Alder, 2016). One just needs to take a glance at the annual 'Development Cooperation Reports' produced by OECD in the past few decades, for instance, wherein all the documents were indeed only dealing with ODA-related issues. As noted in the very beginning of the chapter, this is understandable given the specific historical roots of 'development cooperation' that back to half a century ago the whole area of 'development cooperation' emanated from and rested on the practice of development aid from advanced Euro-American countries to the developing world. However, times have changed. The international development cooperation landscape has undergone dramatic shifts over the half-century, either at the 'recipient' developing world end (e.g. growing heterogeneity among different developing countries and new geography of global poverty) and or the 'giving' end (e.g. emergence of 'new donors and new instruments') (Alonso, 2012). Adding to the urgency of a change of mind is also the widespread questioning and heated debates as to the actual effectiveness of the decades-long ODA from both outside and within the OECD-DAC community (Burnside and Dollar, 2000; Hansen and Tarp, 2000; Easterly, 2003; Sachs, 2005; Moyo, 2010). After all, if 'development' is the ultimate goal, shouldn't ODA only be one of the 'cooperation' means rather than the ends *per se*?

That said, there have seemed to be some signs of change in the recent years; one notable case is the PPP (Public-Private-Partnership) model that starts to be adopted in the international development cooperation area. There is no widely recognized definition of PPP, but rather a cluster of different arrangements that share some key common features: notably the incorporation of *private sector actors* in the provision of *public goods* (esp. facilities and services) that traditionally fall into the domain of government responsibilities. The PPP scheme was initially used in domestic area, particularly in that of infrastructure, and brought into international development cooperation ('development PPP' hereinafter) since the late 1990s largely due to the growing role played by the private sector in international financial flows. Indeed, from the 1990s, private financial flows has grown rapidly and far surpassed ODA; by end of the 1990s, private flows had mounted to 82% of total global financial flows, representing more than 4 times of that of ODA (Ierley, 2002). One of the major objectives of initiating 'development PPP', therefore, is tying to mobilise the private sector resources, particularly capital funds but their specialised expertise as well[16]. Against this background, the development PPP began to be widely adopted by a large number of DAC donors such as the US, UK, Netherlands, Germany, Sweden, Denmark, Canada and publicly advocated by international organizations like the UN and World Bank (BMZ, 2005; DFID, 2011; Lawson, 2011; IOB, 2013; Silva et al, 2015; Ingram et al., 2016). In particular, the concept of 'partnership' started to be raised also in the abovementioned OECD 'Development Cooperation Reports' in recent years and in their 2016 report; for instance, the Report in 2016 clearly mentioned and elaborated on the potential positive role of 'business and private sector' (OECD, 2016).

In essence, 'development PPP' could largely be understood as the expansion of participants from traditional public sector actors to private sector actors[17] and the incorporation of business model – though a number of restraints are imposed in order to safeguard the developmental impact (European Commission, 2014). This new trend emerging in development cooperation has so far not been well researched, which may be attributed to the infancy status of the development PPP practice and thus its still relatively marginal position in the development cooperation landscape. It

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[16] There are mainly two methods whereby the private sector actors are mobilized through the PPP scheme, namely *'Grants Model'* and *'LEGs Model'*. In the first form, the governments invite private sector actors to engage in development-oriented projects through providing a certain amount of 'free money'; a typical example of this is the widely used 'Challenge Funds' by many DAC donors (Pompa, 2013). The 'LEGs Model', on the other hand, indicates cases when the governments form partnership with private sector actors through providing the latter with Loans, Equities or Guarantees in projects that are believed to bear important developmental impacts; this is mostly realized through the respective development finance institutions of the DAC donor countries, such as the CDC (UK), OPIC (US), Kfw-DEG (Germanny), among others.

[17] Or more broadly, all the non-pubic actors as practiced in reality.

is a shame of that for, in many ways, it resonates with the ‘development package’ model of the Southern development partners, despite important differences at the same time.

The last limitation of the existing literature on Southern development partners is the lack of empirical studies. The current research of the topic can be roughly divided into two types: country-specific studies of the respective Southern development partners, and comparison work between those and the traditional DAC donors. Either line of research, however, tends to focus mostly on general patterns (and sometimes even exact figures given the often lack of transparency) of the Southern actors, as has been reviewed earlier. Research from a more micro-level (e.g. project level), and especially based on in-depth fieldwork, on the other hand, has been relatively few. Among the few, a good example – also closely linked to the study of this thesis – is the three-year (2013–15) research project ‘China and Brazil in African Agriculture (CBAA)’ initiated by the Future Agricultures consortium, which has a specific purpose to investigate ‘if a new paradigm for development cooperation is emerging’ (Scoones et al., 2016; Amanor and Chichava, 2016; Gu et al., 2016; Cook et al., 2016; Tugendhat and Alemu, 2016; Xu et al., 2016; Scoones, 2013). The research team is composed of 20 or so scholars, mostly with agricultural and developmental backgrounds. A particular merit of this research project is that they have conducted in-depth fieldwork in four African countries – Ghana, Ethiopia, Zimbabwe and Mozambique – and also tried to combine and balance viewpoints from European, African and Chinese scholars. This type of fieldwork-based studies on Southern development partners, however, is in general very much lacking. One possible problem caused by this may be that much of the implication in terms of Southern actors drawn from the current studies are at best based on theoretical conjectures, but lacks the support of empirical evidence from the ground.

1.3 Research Questions

Given the considerations above – the necessity for deepening understanding of the Southern models of development cooperation as well as the limitation of the existing academic studies on that – I developed an interest in further investigating the *Southern models*, particularly the 'development package' model that goes beyond the traditional ODA concept, with an intentional effort to take a more South-oriented approach and bring in more fieldwork-based empirical evidence in order to remedy the shortcomings of the existing literature (Chapter 1.2). To do that, I decided to choose the case of *Chinese development cooperation in African agriculture* as the subject of examination. The reason why China is chosen is easily justifiable. As has been reviewed before, China has stood most outstandingly among the Southern development partners, both in terms of the absolute volume and also the distinct and often controversial modalities – especially that of the 'package model' – of its development cooperation. Perhaps a few more words should be given here as to why agriculture is chosen as the targeted sector to examine.

Agriculture is selected first and foremost due to the sector's particularly significant role for African development, both for economic growth and people's welfare. Agriculture constitutes the backbone of most African economies. In the bulk of African countries, the agricultural sector is still the largest contributor to their GDP and the main generator of savings, tax revenues and hard currency earnings. With nearly two-thirds of the manufacturing value-added based on agricultural raw materials, agriculture also serves as a significant boost to the continent's industrial development (NEPAD, 2003). Meanwhile, conventional wisdom also supports a strong role of agriculture in addressing the poverty and hunger problem that still prevails on the continent nowadays (Diao, Hazell and Thurlow, 2010). With some 70-80% of the total population- including 70% of the continent's extremely poor and undernourished- living in rural areas and depending mostly on agriculture for their livelihood, the agricultural sector is believed to have the potential to enhance the food security and uplift people on a mass scale more than any other sector (NEPAD, 2003; ECA of the UN, 2007). Therefore, African agriculture has long been the focal point and emphasis of a large number of bilateral and multilateral international development partners in the past half-century, both from the DAC donors (Eicher, 2003) and Southern actors including China (Bräutigam, 1998).

Furthermore, in relation to China-Africa development cooperation, agriculture has been in the central place of Chinese foreign aid in the last century since the late 1950s; more importantly, it has also become the frontier area for China to apply or at least experiment on its innovative 'development package' model of cooperation at the current time. The nature of agriculture being as a productive sector, different from other developmental targets such as health and education, makes it possible to embrace other market-oriented cooperation modalities such as agribusiness, rather than merely relying on development aid. China, for instance, has launched a series of policy measures – far beyond only aid – with the view to boosting agricultural cooperation between China and the African continent since the 2000s under the FOCAC (Forum on China-Africa Cooperation) framework[18]. Just to mention a few, the Chinese government:

[18] The choice of 'agriculture' has also been motivated, to a lesser extent though, by the 'food security debate' arising from the recent wave of China-Africa agricultural cooperation – that is, whether China

- promised to establish 10 Agriculture Technology Demonstration Centres (ATDCs) in Africa (FOCAC, 2006); the number was later increased to 20 (FOCAC, 2009);
- pledged to send 100 Chinese agro-experts (FOCAC, 2006) and dispatch 50 agricultural technical teams with a view to training 2,000 agro-technicians in Africa (FOCAC 2009), and furthermore, help Africa establish a vocational agricultural education system (FOCAC, 2012);
- donated 30 million USD to support South-South cooperation between China and African countries under the framework of the UNFAO's Special Program for Food Security (FOCAC, 2009);
- promised to help African countries improve the capacity for independent development and provide technical support in grain planting, storage, processing and circulation (FOCAC, 2012);
- pledged to encourage Chinese financial institutions to support cooperation between Chinese and African companies in agricultural planting, processing of agricultural products, animal husbandry, fishery and aquaculture (FOCAC, 2012);
- pledged to encourage and support Chinese enterprises to invest in agriculture in Africa; and to implement cooperation projects focusing on technical support in grain planting, storage, sanitary and phytosanitary requirements, animal husbandry, agro-processing capacity, forestry, and fisheries to create a favourable environment for African countries to realize long-term food security supported by national agricultural production and processing (FOCAC, 2015).

Out of considerations of all above, I regard China-Africa agricultural cooperation as an appropriate case for investigating Chinese contemporary development cooperation models, especially that of the 'development package'. Specifically, I have developed the research questions (RQs) revolving the selected topic as follows: ***First***, this thesis aims to adopt a more China-oriented approach and thus try to explain *how* the 'development package model' as typically demonstrated in China's contemporary agricultural cooperation with Africa has been shaped by its own decades-long history of aid-giving and reforms, and particularly by some of the evolving mentalities that underpin this historical trajectory (RQ1). ***Second***, the thesis attempts to explore, through in-depth project-level fieldwork, *how* exactly the 'development package model' has been played out on the ground, and especially how the innovative commercial elements (e.g. business actors and mechanisms) have been incorporated and utilized in China's agricultural development cooperation with Africa (RQ2). ***Lastly***, based on the historical and empirical research, the thesis also tries to make an initial effort to examine the results of this new 'package model' of Chinese development cooperation so far, and more importantly, to provide a systematic explanation to *why* the 'implementation gap' (between the policy expectation and realities) exists in this specific policy issue (RQ3).

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is trying to pursue food security of its huge population at home through obtaining land and developing agriculture in Africa (Freeman et al., 2008; Rubinstein, 2009). I have touched upon this issue in this thesis (Chapter 4.1) and also separately in another paper (Jiang, 2015) in response to the debate. More recently, Professor Deborah Bräutigam's new book – *Will Africa feed China* (2016) – addressed exactly this problem, providing plenty of valuable empirical evidence and insightful analysis for readers to fully understand the land and food security dimension amid China-Africa agricultural cooperation.

1.4 Methodology

This research project is essentially a piece of qualitative work. It does not aim to arrive at any abstract, universally applicable statement, but endeavours to generate explanations to a specific phenomenon with greater richness. It is based on methods of materials collection that 'are both flexible and sensitive to the social context in which data are produced, rather than rigidly standardized or structured, or entirely abstracted from 'real-life' contexts', and methods of materials analysis that 'involve understandings of complexity, detail and context' rather than 'surface patterns, trends, and correlations' (Mason, 2002: 2-3). The following section will explain how data have been collected and analysed in order to seek answers to the proposed research questions.

1.4.1 Data Collection

Document survey

To collect materials for this thesis, I have conducted both a document survey and fieldwork. Data was collected from documents through an extensive document survey from different sources. Most *scholarly works* were accessed from qualified academic databases through the search engines of the LSE library and National Digital Library of China – the former for literature in English and the latter for that in Chinese. This includes books, journal articles, and conference papers on related themes. For *statistics*, I used mostly the data and reports released by recognized institutions such as government agencies (e.g. the Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of Commerce and National Bureau of Statistics in China) and international organizations (e.g. the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, the United Nations and the World Bank), and cited directly from their original print or online publications. For *general information*, I have consulted a variety of sources (e.g. government, company and personal documents), mostly searched for on the Internet; for the consideration of data reliability and quality, I have tried to use documents produced by recognized institutions or professional individuals.

Fieldwork

I. Preparing for the Field

(i) Case country selection

Mozambique is chosen as the case country in this thesis to investigate China's contemporary agricultural development cooperation models in Africa. There are a couple of reasons for that. Firstly, the two countries have enjoyed a decades-long benign cooperation in the area of agriculture. China was among the first countries to recognize Mozambique's independence in 1975 and immediately established diplomatic relations with the latter. Soon after that, in 1976, China started to conduct development cooperation with Mozambique wherein agriculture was already put in the central place (Chichava, 2008). The agricultural cooperation link has since been kept between the two countries and significantly strengthened under the FOCAC framework after the 2000s.

Secondly, the contemporary China-Mozambique agricultural interaction has fully demonstrated the 'package model' of Chinese agricultural development cooperation in Africa and shown particular representativeness in terms of the 'innovative agro-aid' and 'agribusiness' sub-models. For instance, the ATDC (Agriculture Technology Demonstration Centre) in Mozambique was among the first of the 20 or so ATDCs – which are a typical example of the 'innovative agro-aid' model – that China has built in different African countries since 2006; it is also regarded by the Chinese government (particularly the Ministry of Commerce and Ministry of Agriculture) as one of the most successful cases of all the ATDCs (Zhang and Zhang, 2015). As regards Chinese agribusiness engagement, Mozambique is one of the countries in Africa that hosted the largest number of Chinese agro-investors as well as the most sizable Chinese agribusiness projects (Table 4-4 and Box 4-1). It is thus a very typical case to examine China's current agricultural engagement in Africa.

Thirdly, Mozambique is still a largely agriculture-based country with agriculture contributing to 25% of the country's GDP, 41% to its exports and with 67% of the people living in the rural area. Food security remains a concern to the country. Also, Mozambique has roughly 70% of the total population who are still living under the poverty line of $1.9 per day according to the World Bank calculation, and staying on the list of the UN-identified Least Developed Countries by 2016. Agricultural development, therefore, bears large potential to help create jobs, alleviate poverty as well as improve food security of the country; and so does agricultural development cooperation with external partners including China.

(ii) Pre-field survey

A comprehensive survey was conducted before heading for the field. This involved, for instance, a survey on *general backgrounds* such as the bilateral relations between China and the case study countries, the current situations of Chinese agricultural aid and agribusiness investment in the case country, and the development status of the case country' agricultural sector; and *more specifically*, a survey on the different Chinese agro-aid and investment projects in the case country, including the project backgrounds, histories, localities and operations.

Based on that, three sets of documents were carefully prepared beforehand: 1) a list of all the potential projects and institutes to visit; 2) background of these projects and agencies; 3) an outline of interview questions for different projects and agencies.

II. In the Field

I went to the field twice to collect the required data. The first fieldwork was carried out in Mozambique from September to December in 2013. It took about two months (Sep–Oct 2013) for me to get familiar with the local environment – for it was the first time for me to visit Africa – and more importantly, to establish personal networks and find reliable informants[19]. Interviews and other fieldwork, including site visits and

[19] *On the Chinese side*, I gained contacts mainly through two channels, going to visit people and find informants directly, or getting to know them through others' introduction. The first one was the most important channel, especially in the initial phase when I basically knew no one there. I went directly to the targeted projects (e.g. the ATDC in Boane and the Wanbao project in Xaixai) and the relevant Chinese government agencies in Mozambique (e.g. the Economic and Commercial Counselor's Office of the Chinese Embassy) according to the list prepared beforehand, introducing myself and the research purposes to the people on sites and inquiring about the possibility of talking to someone who may provide some information. This, however, proved to be rather difficult, for the Chinese stakeholders, especially those working for the government or government projects, tended to be very

market surveys, were intensively conducted in November and December, mostly in Maputo (the capital city), Boane (in Maputo province) and Xaixai (in Gaza province). I also went to the central province of Sofala, trying to visit two other projects (Hefeng and CACD) and interview the relevant stakeholders, but did not succeed due to some communication problems.

The second fieldwork was conducted in Mozambique between December 2014 and January 2015. The reason why this second fieldwork was needed was: 1) to follow up the projects in Mozambique; 2) to research the two projects in Beira that I did not manage to do during the first fieldwork. Because of the network established and experience gained during the first fieldwork, this time the fieldwork went more smoothly and also took much less time. The research tasks were finished within two months.

Two specific methods were used during the fieldwork process: qualitative interviewing and participant observation.

(i) Qualitative interviewing

Qualitative interviewing refers to 'in-depth, semi-structured or loosely structured forms of interviewing', with a few distinctive characteristics such as 'the interactional exchange of dialogue', 'a relatively informal style', and 'a thematic, topic-centred, biographical or narrative approach' (Mason, 2002: 62-3).

I researched in total six different Chinese agro-aid and agribusiness projects, but included only four of them in the thesis – specifically the ATDC in Mozambique, Waobao, Hefeng and CAAIC – for their representativeness (Chapter 4.2). During this process I talked with around dozens of informants through formal and informal interviews (see Appendix 9). The informants roughly fall into three categories: 1) officials from both Chinese and Mozambican sides related to the projects; 2) company staff (Chinese and Mozambican), including the heads, managers, technicians, as well as the workers and farmers working on the projects researched; 3) local Mozambican farmers living near the project sites and NGOs.

Interviews were conducted mostly by myself, but on a few occasions in collaboration with other colleagues or with assistance from local translators. Most of the interviews were done face-to-face between the interviewees and me in the field, but some were

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cautious about the my *identity (including nationality)* and *purposes*; being *an independent PhD student* (rather than an established scholar associated with certain institutes) who *studies in a Western university* and *without any referees*, among others, all seemed to have further compounded the difficulties. It was in essence a matter of trust building between the Chinese stakeholders and me; and it did take time, sometimes involving several rounds of formal and informal talks with different people just to gain access to one project or to talk to one person. But the efforts were all worth it for in the end most of the stakeholders agreed to provide interview opportunities or at least some useful information. Meanwhile, I also tried to get into the Chinese community in Mozambique and later on also found a part-time job in a Chinese state-owned enterprise. This proved to be very helpful for the my research because the Chinese community there was a small circle where people know people; thus you would be able to get *more contacts* for research within *shorter period of time,* and often have *easier access* to the informants for you've got some people as your referees. The contacts of Hefeng and CAAIC, for instance, were gained and accessed in this way. *On the Mozambican/South African side*, I gained great help from local researchers -- Dr. Chichava, for instance, from the IESE based in Maputo – who provided some local contacts and collaborated in conducting some interviews and fieldworks.

also conducted over the telephone. For a formal interview, it normally took 1-2 hours with recordings and notes.

(ii) Participant observation

Participant observation refers to 'methods of generating data which entail the researcher immersing herself or himself in a research 'setting' so that they can experience and observe at first hand a range of dimensions in and of that setting' (Mazon, 2002: 84). It requires the researcher to prepare 'not just for the process and technique of observation, but also for social interaction' in a diversity of ways, such as 'participating, interrogating, listening, communicating, as well as a range of other forms of being, doing and thinking' (Mazon, 2002: 87).

In this research, I conducted participant observation in two ways: First, through working and living together with the company staff being researched. I went to visit and stayed on the project sites twice: once at the Wanbao project for one week (Xaixai, Gaza; Nov 2013), and once at the Hefeng project for two days (Buzi, Sofala; Jan 2015). During the working time, I went with the staff to the paddies and observed, for instance, their production and processing model, the agro-technology training (between the Chinese technicians and Mozambican farmers), and the co-working model (between Chinese and Mozambican farmers); during lunch and dinner break, I conducted semi-structured interviews (formal) or had causal talks (informal) with different people on the sites.

Second, the participant observation is also conducted through site visits and informal inquiry. For example, in order to understand the sales situation of the rice produced by the Chinese companies being researched, I went to different supermarkets and convenience stores, both of Chinese and other local brands, to check and compare the prices, ask the shopkeepers about the sales (and problems, if any) and consumers about their feedback as to certain Chinese brand rice.

1.4.2 Data Analysis

After the questions being proposed (Chapter 1.3) and data collected (Chapter 1.4.1), the (descriptive/causal) links between the two now need to be established, which is also the core task of data analysis for a qualitative work of research. Given that RQ1&2, for their descriptive nature, can be largely answered directly by the data, the following section will only introduce the data analysis methods adopted by in the thesis trying to bridge the data and the why-question (RQ3). To do that, I found necessary to develop an analytical framework and it took me three steps as follows.

First, I went back to the collected data (the reading notes, interview transcripts, field notes, etc.), carefully going over every detail in the notes and getting myself fully familiar with the data. Then, I tentatively summarized all the potential explanatory factors/variables – no matter the extent of their explanatory power they have – wrote them down alongside the notes and highlighted them; and greater attention was paid to those that repeatedly appear in different fields (aid/investment) and specific project cases. For example, 'the actors' lack of knowledge about the local environment' arose frequently when I went through the notes and was signalized every time when it arose and put together.

Notably, this process was not purely literal reading; instead, interpretation was indispensible. For instance, in the original notes they may only said that ‘XX expressed they did not know who on the Mozambican side was in charge of the issue’, ‘XX said they did not expect the risk of the climate disaster”, or “XX did not realize there were so many foreign traders already existing in the local markets’; and to label all similar situations under the ‘actors’ lack of knowledge about the local environment’ was an interpretation of the author. This first-step, as explained above, is similar to what is termed by Mason (2002) as “cross-sectional and categorical indexing” and all those categorically indexed data, such as the ‘actors’ lack of knowledge of local environment’, formed a pool of potential explanatory factors/variables – which could be called Pool A.

After that, I started to seek theoretical support from existing literature. This was considered necessary for two reasons: first, to offset the possible omission of important variables by taking advantage of the established theories; second, to ‘talk with’ the existing theoretical debates and hopefully contribute to that by my empirical findings. Specifically, I first positioned the research question in the field of Public Policy given the close relevance between the two, and then conducted a systematic literature review on implementation, with a particular focus on the implementation effectiveness. For the framework building purpose, I intentionally highlighted the variables that were already identified by existing literature as relevant to the implementation effectiveness. This formed a pool of existing explanatory factors/variables – which can be called Pool B.

Lastly, I started to try establishing the analytical framework by comparing Pool A and Pool B and finalized the group of variables that are most relevant to this present research. This process involved: i) identifying the overlapped variables between Pool A and Pool B, for they may mean the same thing but use different terms, and keeping them in the framework; ii) identifying those that were deemed important in Pool B but absent in Pool A, thinking about the reasons (not at work in the present work or omitted during the data review process), and adding the omitted in the framework; iii) identifying those appearing in Pool A but not (or not adequately) discussed in Pool B, thinking about the reasons (the specialty of this present research?), and deciding whether to keep these variables or leave them. In sum, this last step was an interactive dialogue between empirical data (Pool A) and existing theories (Pool B).

It took about a few months for this framework building process, the outcome of which is demonstrated in the following section (Chapter 1.5). It is worth noting that this is actually also a hypothesis-making or explanation-seeking process. Different from the type of research wherein hypotheses are propositions that are often deducted from existing theories/studies and wait to be tested out by the research, in this thesis, hypotheses are indeed a set of tentative explanations deriving from the research for the specific research question (RQ3). For that reason, there are no clearly pre-proposed hypotheses, but all working hypotheses which have kept being refined in the process until the analytical framework is built up. The framework, therefore, could be seen as a skeleton of the explanations (to RQ3) for it already entails a dialogue with the data rather than being merely a theoretical one – although these explanations still need to be further fleshed out in the final conclusive chapter (Chapter 5).

1.5 Explaining the 'Implementation Gap': The Public Policy Approach

The broader research topic of the thesis, namely Chinese development cooperation with Africa, could essentially be treated as a *'public policy'* question – marked by a series of *intentional action plans*, i.e. the development package, initiated and led by *governmental actors*, orienting towards a clearly stated and shared *public problem*, agricultural development. In this vein, the RQ3 set forth earlier (Chapter 1.3), which is aimed at evaluating the results – particularly the 'gap' as observed through fieldwork – as well as the influencing factors, is a problem of policy implementation and will be investigated in this thesis by applying the approach of Public Policy Implementation (PPI). The following section will first provide a brief introduction to the implementation studies of public policy, and on the basis of that, develop an analytical framework to explain the results of Chinese development cooperation policy in African agriculture specifically.

1.5.1 Implementation of Public Policy (PPI)

> [P]olicy implementation encompasses those actions by public and private individuals (or groups) that are directed at the achievement of objectives set forth in prior policy decisions. This includes both one-time efforts to transform decisions into operation terms, as well as continuing efforts to achieve the large and small changes mandated by policy decisions. (Van Meter and Van Horn, 1975: 447)

> Implementation is the carrying out of a basic policy decision, usually made in a statute (although also possible through important executive orders or court decisions). Ideally, that decision identified the problem(s) to be addressed, stipulates the objective(s) to be pursued, and, in a variety of ways, 'structures' the implementation process. (Sabatier, 1980: 540-41)

Implementation research is regarded by some as an interdisciplinary subfield of Public Policy and Public Administration under the broader umbrella subject of Political Science (Winter, 2012a: 256). While it by no means indicates that no one had paid any serious attention to this issue before (Van Meter and Van Horn, 1975: 452-8; Hill and Hupe, 2002: 18-40), it is still fair to claim that, as a relatively independent academic field, implementation research emerged around the early 1970s, largely in response to the domestic public policy failures that were quite often seen in industrial societies of the North America and Europe. As observed by Hanf (1978: 1), 'The euphoria that accompanied attempts at social engineering through public policies in the sixties has given way to a sobering recognition of the basic intractability of social problems'. 'Implementation', therefore, was discovered as a 'missing link' (Hargrove, 1975) in the sense that neither the research on policy process in general nor that on policy failures specifically had given adequate attention to it. Greatly stimulated by the seminal work of Pressman and Wildavsky in 1973, implementation research gradually became 'one of the fads of political science and policy analysis and reached its peak in the mid-1980s' (Winter, 2012a: 255). Studies on implementation went on through the 1990s until the present time, but at a much lesser strength especially compared to the high tide of the 1970s and 80s[20].

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[20] Some scholars in the field claim that implementation research has already lost its momentum, partly due to its considerable pluralism and fragmentation and thus lack in any consensual theory after decades of scholarly pursuit (DeLeon, 1999; O'Toole, 2000); whereas others argue that the decline is only 'relative', or, there have been indeed more writings on this subject but 'with diverse themes taken

There are chiefly three approaches – namely 'top-down', 'bottom-up' and 'synthesis' – to the implementation research[21]. Perhaps most intriguing is the debate between the first two, that is, to put it in the simplest way, *who is taking the lead and making the real difference in the process of implementation* – 'the top' which refers to the policymakers, and particularly, their formulated policy; or 'the bottom', that is the policy implementers? This top/bottom divide has in fact inexplicitly shown the conventional ideas as to the differentiation between the process of government politics and administration; or, through the lens of policy approach, the differentiation between policy-making and policy-execution. It may also be helpful to note that the top/bottom debate is not new, nor is it exclusive to the studies of implementation only. Therefore, the readers may well find themselves hearing reverberations of some old themes, such as 'rational analysis versus muddling through, scientific management versus organization development, top-down compliance versus grass-roots control' (Berman, 1980: 206); and it is indeed quite necessary for one to bear this in mind in order to gain a broader understanding.

I. Top-Down Approach[22]

The top-down approach, as its label implies, places great emphasis on the role of 'the top' – that is, as mentioned earlier, the policymakers as well as their formulated official policy – in shaping the process of implementation. It is assumed that the power, both in terms of authority and capability, of guiding and steering implementation resides with 'the top', and thus, efforts should be made in advising policymakers on how to *formulate* a good policy and *control* the implementation process in an effective way. Accordingly, it is common to find in top-down works a good number of 'variables' or 'conditions' identified by researchers as indispensable for enabling a satisfactory implementation, presenting itself as a fairly prescriptive approach (e.g. Van Meter and Van Horn, 1975; Hood, 1976; Gunn, 1978; Sabatier and Mazmanian, 1979 and 1980).

The policy-implementers that are considered as the 'bottom' end of a policy process have therefore been largely downplayed. Their role is reduced to no more than one who is supposed to merely and strictly carry out what they are told to do. In some cases, such as for Dunsire (1990: 15), everything that concerns 'love, hate, envy, in fact any motivational factors whatsoever' is deliberately excluded, in order to create a perfect rational model and better understand the logical relationship between input (policy), process and output (Parsons, 1995: 466-7). That said, this does not mean that top-down scholars entirely ignore policy-implementers; indeed, much attention has been paid to, for instance, the implementer 'characteristics' and 'dispositions' Van Meter and Van Horn, 1975), as well as the dynamic 'games' among implementers (Bardach, 1977). However, with a presumed dominance of 'the top' in mind, top-down scholars tend to regard policy-implementers only as part of the

up in different ways, under different labels, and often in distinct substantive fields' (Hill and Hupe, 2002: 96; Lindquist and Wanna, 2015: 211).

[21] Some more comprehensive reviews on the three approaches of the public policy implementation research could be seen, for instance, in Sabatier (1986), Parsons (1995), Hill and Hupe (2002) and Lindquist and Wanna (2015).

[22] Representative top-down works include, for instance, Pressman and Wildavsky (1973, 1984), Van Meter and Van Horn (1975), Hood (1976), Bardach (1977), Gunn (1978, 1984), Sabatier and Mazmanian (1979, 1980).

policy *formulation* and object of *control* – and when they go astray from central command – something that is 'dysfunctional' (Pressman and Wildavsky, 1973: 134), 'illicit' and 'evil' (Elmore, 1979: 610), and thus has to be 'fixed' through careful 'scenario writing' (Bardach, 1977).

Along these lines, a typical chain of analysis from a top-down scholar would be, as summarized by Sabatier (1986: 22-3), to start with a policy decision by governmental officials, then to examine to what extent the implementers and target groups' actions are consistent with policy objectives, thus to evaluate to what extent the objectives are achieved over time, and based on that, to investigate the factors that affect policy outputs and impacts. The attainment of the policy objectives, therefore, – suppose the policy *is* soundly formulated – is usually regarded as the criteria for successful implementation; and *if not*, efforts should then be put into 'reformulating' the policy 'on the basis of experience'.

II. Bottom-Up Approach[23]

The bottom-up camp, on the other hand, advocates that it is the 'bottom' implementers that dominate the process and outcomes of policy implementation. Although with a clear problem-solving orientation, a policy that is made by the policymakers based on the top-down assumption, or through a 'forward mapping' strategy as termed by Elmore, is largely only a 'hypothetical' connection building between policy implements and expected outcomes. A more accurate reading of the cause-effect relationship may well come from 'the bottom', and thus *their* options and choices are more valid (Elmore, 1985: 36). Even if a correct causal link is represented in a policy, 'it is not the policy or the policymaker that solves the problem, but someone with immediate proximity'; policy can only 'direct individuals' attention toward a problem and provide them an occasion for the application of skill and judgement, but policy cannot itself solve problems' (Elmore, 1979: 612). Simply put, the agency of 'bottom' policy-implementers, good or bad, can by no means be neglected; however sound a policy might be in design, it boils down to the *capability* and *willingness* of the implementers to follow it through.

It is in this vein that the exact influence of policy and its formulator on implementation, which the top-down approach highly emphasize, is greatly questioned by the bottom-uppers (Elmore, 1979: 604). To extend this even further, Lipsky (1980) challenges the actual validity of a centrally defined policy in terms of the extent to which it is to be executed.

> I argue that the decisions of street-level bureaucrats, the routines they establish, and the devices they invent to cope with uncertainties and work pressures, effectively *become* the public policies they carry out. I argue that public policy is not best understood as made in legislatures or top-floor suites of high-ranking administrators, because in important ways it is actually made in the crowded offices and daily encounters of street-level workers. (Lipsky, 1980: xii)

Further, effective control from the top, another top-down core element, seems to bottom-uppers no more than a myth (Elmore, 1979: 603). The *discretion* of and *complexity of joint action* among implementers, among other key issues addressed by

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[23] Works of typical bottom-up approach include, for instance, Lipsky (1971, 1980), Elmore (1980), Hjern et al. (1978), Hjern and Porter (1981), Hjern (1982), Hjern and Hull (1982)

the bottom-up scholars, make central steering incredibly difficult, if not impossible. Furthermore, control can even be counterproductive. Taking bureaucrat implementers as an example, if, the implementation of policy is understood as being what Lipsky depicts as 'street-level workers with high service ideals exercising discretion under intolerable pressures', then, any attempt to control them hierarchically would only increase their tendency to stereotype and stray away from 'top' expectations (Hill and Hupe, 2002: 53).

A typical bottom-up method in studying implementation processes can be seen in the work of Hjern and his colleagues (Hjern et al., 1978; Hjern and Porter, 1981; Hjern and Hull, 1982). Instead of a preoccupation with any policy mandate, they start from in a pool of relevant organizations – that is, the 'implementation structure', as it is termed by the authors – and then investigate their opinions, strategies and actions concerning a specific policy problem. Accordingly, what matters in assessing the success or failure of implementation, in the eyes of bottom-uppers, is indeed to what extent the target problem is solved, rather than that the policy objective fulfilled.

III. Synthesis[24]

Following on the initial debate between the 'top-down' and 'bottom-up' approaches, more and more scholars, particularly from the 1980s on, tended to take a synthesizing approach to implementation research. The 'synthesizing' efforts are most manifestly seen in those works that try to bring the perspectives and variables of the two schools of thought together, either in an integrated way (e.g. Elmore 1985, Sabatier, 1986; Winter, 1990), or on a contingency basis (e.g. Berman, 1980; Matland, 1995).

In a more general manner, Elmore, one of the abovementioned 'bottom-up' advocates, compared, in his later work (1985), the two logics of 'forward mapping' and 'backward mapping', and went on to call for a combination of both in order to achieve a satisfactory policy outcome.

> From the forward mapping perspective, the problem is finding a collection of implements that is likely to produce the effect that policymakers want. From the backward mapping perspective, the problem is finding a set of decisions that policy can influences and specifying how policy can tip those decisions in the desired direction. Forward mapping stresses what policymakers control; backward mapping stresses the marginal influence that policy exercises over decisions by individuals and organizations… the success of policy depends on more than choosing the correct combination of implements; it depends as well on conditions outside the control of policymakers and on decisions over which policy exercises only a marginal influence. (Elmore, 1985: 68-9)

In a more theoretical attempt, Sabatier (1986) proposed an 'advocacy coalition framework' as a conceptual vehicle to analyse implementation processes, and particularly, to explain policy change over time. This is a typical integrated framework built upon the two schools in that it adopts 'a whole variety of public and private actors involved within a policy problem', both proponents and opponents, as its unit of analysis as what the bottom-uppers normally do. At the same time it

[24] Works using a synthesizing approach include, for instance, Majone and Wildavsky, 1978; Browne and Wildavsky, 1984; Sabatier, 1986, 1988; Winter, 1990; Scharpf, 1978; Matland, 1995; Elmore, 1985; Ripley and Franklin, 1982; Goggin et al., 1990.

blends that with the top-downers' concerns with the manner in which 'social-economic conditions and legal instruments constrain behaviour' (Sabatier, 1986: 39).

Similarly, in what is termed the 'integrated implementation model', Winter (1990) combines the typical top-down kind of consideration as to 'policy formulation' and 'policy design' with the 'implementation process' where, in line with the bottom-up approach, emphasis is put more upon the attributes and behaviours of the field actors, specifically organizations, street-level bureaucrats and target groups. But as he himself commented later on, the purpose of the model is 'not to make a true synthesis' between the two schools of thought, but rather 'to integrate a number of the most fruitful theoretical elements from various pieces of implementation research – regardless of their origin – into a joint model or framework' (Winter, 2012a: 270).

Another line of synthesis is the development of contingency analysis of implementation. Berman (1978, 1980) and Matland (1995) are representative writers in this fashion. In Berman's work (1980), he first sets out two types of 'implementation strategy': 'programmed implementation strategy', a typical top-down method that depends highly on the 'specificity' of a given policy and the strict following through by all levels of the implementers involved; and bottom-up 'adaptive implementation strategy' that 'allows policy to be modified, specified and revised – in a word, adapted – according to the unfolding interaction of the policy with its institutional setting'. He then argues that, in choosing from the two strategies with a view to achieving a satisfactory implementation result, one has to be take adequate consideration of the 'context' or 'policy situation' to make sure that strategies match situations. Specifically, five elements of the policy situation are picked out as important in shaping the choice, that is the policy's 'scope of change, its degree of technical certainty, the extent of agreement about the policy, the degree of coordination characteristic of the implementing system, and the stability of the policy's environment'.

Critically drawing on Berman's work (1978, 1980), Matland (1995) later developed his 'ambiguity-conflict model', in which he distinguishes four types of implementation according to the different collation of the two determinant variables. Under this typology, Matland points out that the top-down models present an accurate description of the implementation process when policy is clear and conflict is low, i.e. the 'administrative implementation' in the matrix, thus *macro-implementation* (a concept borrowed from Berman 1978) planners can wield considerable influence. Meanwhile, bottom-up models better suit the implementation process when policy is ambiguous and conflict is low, i.e. the 'experimental implementation', where *micro-implementation* levels dominate and should be encouraged to vary.

Table 1-1 Matland's Model

Ambiguity-Conflict Matrix: Policy Implementation Processes

	Conflict: Low	Conflict: High
Ambiguity: Low	*Administrative Implementation* Resources Example: Smallpox erradication	*Political Implementation* Power Example: Busing
Ambiguity: High	*Experimental Implementation* Contextual Conditions Example: Headstart	*Symbolic Implementation* Coalition Strength Example: Community action agencies

Source: Matland, 1995.

Aside from what have been discussed above, the synthesizing approach also includes a broader group of works which may endeavour to elaborate on some more specific issues, but with a natural embrace of both the roles of 'the top' and 'the bottom'. Some of the important issues addressed include, for example, 'policy types' (Windhoff-Héritier, 1980; Ripley and Franklin, 1982); 'policy network/multi-actor environment of implementation' (Scharpf, 1978; O'Toole, 1986 and 2000; Kickert, Klijn and Koppenjan, 1997); 'communications model' between layers of government (Goggin et al., 1990); and 'governance' whereby the authorities can 'manipulate the conditions of the implementation process to encourage co-operative responses to conflicts of interest' (Stoker, 1991: 50). Processure

1.5.2 The 'Policy–Implementer–Environment' Analytical Framework

Drawing greatly from the PPI literature and closely linking to the empirical evidence of the thesis, I develop the following framework as an analytical tool to examine and explain the actual outcomes of Chinese development cooperation policy in African agriculture and particularly the influencing factors behind them[25]. The framework is held up by three main pillars, namely policy, implementer and environment. *Policy* is attached with considerable importance in this framework and treated as the starting point of analysis. That said, the present framework does not entirely agree with the top-down approach and indeed puts great emphasis onto *implementer* behaviours. It is in this sense that this framework is in effect adopting a synthesizing approach, but more in the fashion of Sabatier (1986) and Winter (1990) that attempts to develop an integrated synthesis by combining together key elements that are considered important from the two approaches. *Environment* – more specifically, the implementation environment – which has not been very much discussed in the PPI literature but proved to be very pertinent to the research topic of the thesis, is also

[25] For the details of how this analytical framework is developed, see Chapter 1.4.2.

incorporated as an important aspect in this framework. The section that follows will explain in more detail the three key aspects as well as some subordinating variables that are deemed as particularly relevant in analysing the research topic of the thesis.

I. Policy

Policy is defined here as a purposive course of action proposed and adopted by government authorities aiming to deal with specific public issues or problems. By emphasizing 'proposed and *adopted*', the 'policy' definition here excludes the situation where policies are proposed only for certain political reasons (e.g. winning public support in elections) but never put into practice; rather, in this analytical framework as well sd the discussion of the thesis topic, 'policy' is always associated with concrete actions that have been or will be actually taken. Furthermore, while admitting the validity of top-down-style made policies[26], the definition here includes far beyond only those white-paper-like, readily-written-type policies; as long as policy initiatives are proclaimed in public occasions and followed on by actual actions, they are regarded as government policies in the thesis. Lastly, it should be noted that policies can be examined in different levels; taking the Chinese development cooperation policies under discussion for example, the overall development cooperation policies as well as those more detailed innovative aid and agribusiness sub-policies are all within the application range of this analytical framework.

Two policy-related variables are considered important and pertinent to the thesis topic, namely policy design and policy control[27]. *Policy design* is defined as 'the process of inventing, developing and fine-tuning a course of action with the amelioration of some problem' (Dryzek, 1983: 346). It involves setting and/or choices of intentions or goals, instruments or means for accomplishing the intentions, governmental and non-governmental entities charged with carrying out the intentions, resources for requisite tasks (May, 2012: 279), with a view to making each of these policy components not only inherently as sound as possible but also validly linked with one another[28]. For instance, policy objectives are expected, at least in an ideal situation, to be 'precise and clearly ranked in importance' (Sabatier and Mazmanian, 1979: 487), while demonstrating a reasonable causal theory linking both to the policy problems and the specific action plans. Or, the policy tasks are ideally supposed to be specified 'in complete detail and perfect sequence' to 'each participant' (Gunn, 1984: 205).

[26] Thus dismissing the use of 'policy' as what the front-line implementers are actually carrying out, as the bottom-up scholars advocate; see Chapter 1.5.1.

[27] Other variables being discussed in the PPI literature include, for instance, "setting of goals", "causal chain connecting actions to objectives" (Pressman and Wildavsky, 1984: xxii-xxv); "policy standards and objectives", "policy resources" (Van Meter and Van Horn, 1975: 462-65); "norms/rules/objectives", "line of authority", "obedience" or "administrative control" (Hood, 1976: 6-7); "resources", "theory of cause and effect", "dependency relationships" of implementing agencies, "objectives", "tasks", "compliance" (Gunn, 1984: 200-207); "causal theory", "policy objectives", "financial resources", "agencies" selection, "hierarchical integration with and among implementing agencies", "recruitment of implementing official", "formal access by outsiders" (Sabatier and Mazmanian, 1979: 486-494; Sabatier, 1986: 24); "policy conflict" and "policy ambiguity" (Matland, 1995).

[28] Policy design, at least in this present framework, is treated as a technocratic matter – while admitting the bounded rationality and practical difficulties to always achieve a perfect design, it does not take into consideration the possible political manipulation such as policy goals that are intentionally made vague in order to reduce conflicts and get the policy passed.

That said, however well a policy might be designed, what is simultaneously needed is appropriate and adequate *policy control*. This is so because seldom is a policy self-implemented; to put it into effect, a policy has to be executed by some *intermediary implementers* in an effort to influence the behaviours of certain *target groups* – and neither of these two groups are naturally obedient to their commanders. Therefore, as rightly pointed out by Hood (1976: 23), 'controls have to be deployed at a minimum of two levels: the level of the administrative apparatus itself and the level of the 'administered' population'. There are many specific methods (Peters, 2013: 306-332) but also important limitations (Hood, 1976) for policy controls. Control can be particularly difficult in the case of external (public) policies due to the geographical distance involved. Moreover, when policies are targeting at foreign groups, while certain control is still indispensable, it does, however, have to be taken very skilfully in order to avoid unnecessary diplomatic resentment. This is because, as an important difference with domestic public policy, the authorities have no governing legitimacy over the foreign target groups – therefore, their control over the latter, particularly in normal/routine situations (contrary to crisis situations such as inter-state wars), has to be exerted in a 'softer' manner, for instance, more through negotiation or opinion exchange rather than regulation or sanctions. In this sense, it might be more appropriate to use *'influence'* instead of 'control' when it comes to the target groups of an external policy.

Apart from situations of recalcitrance, control is also needed in a more general sense, as a way of macro-steering. A typical case here is the top-down coordination of different implementers in face of the prevailing multi-organizational implementation problem (Hanf and Scharpf, 1978). The policymaking authorities then will need to devise and employ appropriate 'influence strategies' on the implementers depending on the different exchange relationships between one another (Scharpf, 1978: 352-8), in order to make them stick together, collaborate productively and thus achieve the policy objectives. This is also the emphasised role of foreign policies, as asserted by Clarke, that is, to 'hold coalitions together in some sort of structure' (Smith and Clarke, 1985: 187).

II. Implementer

Implementer refers to the entity who puts a given policy into practice. An important caveat that needs to be made beforehand is that, implementers in the context of this thesis include not only the formally assigned, usually governmental actors, but also those who may not be officially entrusted with the task of carrying out a particular policy but nevertheless in effect actively engage in the policy implementation process – the Chinese companies that are following the state-led agricultural development cooperation, especially that of the agribusiness sub-policy in Africa, in this paper are a case in point. These actors may be termed as *'unintentional policy implementers'* in the sense that they seem to mostly follow their own agenda, but unintentionally also contribute, to different extent, to the realization of the government policy objectives.

Policy implementers are seldom a unitary entity. In the domestic public sphere, back to the 1970s, governments in industrial societies were already increasingly confronted with tasks 'where both the problems and their solution tend to cut across the boundaries of separate authorities and functional jurisdictions', and thus require 'participants from different decision levels and from a variety of functionally specialized organizational units' (Hanf, 1978: 1-2). Indeed, as argued by Scharpf (1978: 347) who was among the earliest that brought the idea of 'policy network' into implementation research (Hill and Hupe, 2009: 59; Pülzl and Treib, 2007: 96), '[it] is unlikely, if not impossible, that public policy of any significance could result from the choice process of any single unified actor. Policy formulation and policy implementation are inevitably the result of interactions among a plurality of separate actors with separate interests, goals and strategies.' Later on, Hjern (1981: 212-3) also incorporates private actors, among many other organizations that newly emerged after World War II, into the picture of policy implementers.

Several variables are deemed particularly relevant among the diversity of explanatory factors for implementation results from the bottom-up point of view[29], namely capabilities, motivations, discretions and cooperation.

While many may take the *capability* factor as granted in an implementation scenario, an oft-seen problem, however, is precisely the mismatch between the implementer capabilities and the policy-task requirements. This is particularly so when some new policies are concerned where relevant experiences are lacking, and may happen even when implementers have been through an intentional selection procedure. One possible reason is the fact that in most cases implementing agencies are chosen by some 'hard' criteria (e.g. different sorts of qualifications) which give great emphasis to their professional abilities but tell little about other dimensions of the candidates. The capabilities of implementers may be able to be improved either through efforts from within, such as the implementers' own learning and adaption, or from outside, such as different types of support from the commanding authorities. However, the capability improvement of implementers, particularly for new policies, may require a relatively longer period. This would accordingly imply that the mismatch between implementer capability and task requirements may stand as an obstacle to effective implementation for quite a while.

The second factor is the *motivation*, or willingness, of implementers to execute a given policy. It is not entirely impossible to expect voluntary compliance of the implementing agencies out of pure obligation. On this point, organization type does matter. State actors, either governmental or corporate, are understandably more inclined to faithfully carry out a government policy, due to their legal or even moral commitment, than non-state actors, say, private companies or NGOs. The shadow of control, of course, also hangs over the implementers. However, as has already been

[29] Other variables being discussed in the PPI literature include, for instance, "complexity of joint action" (Pressman and Wildavsky, 1973); "characteristics of the implementing agencies" (e.g. the competence and size of the staff, the degree of hierarchical control, an agency's political resources, the vitality of an organization, the degree of open communications within an organization, or the agency's linkages with the policy-making body), "disposition of implementers" (e.g. cognition of the policy, the direction of their response toward it, and the intensity of that response), and "inter-organizational communication and enforcement activities" (Van Meter and Van Horn, 1975: 465-74); "implementation games" (e.g. the stakes, strategies, tactics, resources of players, the rules of play and fair play, the nature of communications among players) (Bardach, 1977); "discretion" and "autonomy" and "resources for resistance" (Lipsky,1980); "organizational processes and outputs", "complexity of joint action", "discretion", and "coalition and bargaining" (Elmore, 1979); "supportive agencies" and "skilled agency leaders" (Sabatier and Mazmanian, 1979: 487, 494); "multi-actor environment" (O'Toole, 1986: 182); "inter-organisational policy/policy network" (Scharpf, 1978; Kickert, Klijn and Koppenjan, 1997); "implementation structure" (Hjern and Porter, 1981); "advocacy coalition" (Sabatier, 1986); "policy-action continuum (Barrett and Fudge, 1981).

widely acknowledged, even for those obligatorily bound state bureaucracies, they are never acquiescent puppets of government. Driven by their disparate organization interests and agendas, they apparently do not always follow the instructions only because they are supposed to do so (see e.g. Hanf and Scharpf, 1978; Lipsky, 1980); and it may even be so for those only loosely bound, non-state actors, or those 'unintentional implementers' who have no legal obligation to the government at all.

Therefore, it is perhaps more realistic to stick to the self-interested human nature assumption, and reaffirm that, for the most part, it is the congruity of objectives, or more pertinently, compatibility of the underlying interests, that determines implementers' motivation. Leaving aside the factor of external control, it is assumed that implementers, like any individuals in an organisation, tend to pursue first and foremost their own interests and aims. Therefore, the argument is that, the more compatible the implementers' interests are with those of the policy-making authority, and thus the more the objectives of the two tend to overlap, the more the implementers may feel like faithfully carrying out a given policy. On the contrary, if there is not much in common in terms of the two parties' pursuits, or even there are contradictory aims, it would be naïve to expect implementers to automatically follow the order; they may do so, but quite likely only in a half-hearted, less-motivated way, and they may even choose to disregard the 'national interests' that are supposed to underpin the government policy objectives.

Implementer *discretion* is another widely recognized phenomenon. Sticking to its dictionary meaning, discretion is defined here as the ability and right to decide exactly what should be done in a particular situation. The discretion of implementers can be seen as a kind of 'informal authority that derives from expertise, skill, and proximity to the essential tasks that an organization performs' (Elmore, 1979: 606). In addition, implementers may have certain levels of resources, allocated by the policymakers or self-owned, which make it possible to carry out their discretionary decisions when they feel necessary. The limitations of policy control, furthermore, open opportunities of discretion exertion.

There are different situations where discretion may be exercised and accordingly may have both positive and negative effects. It may happen when the policies formulated by 'the top' are rather ambiguous, particularly in terms of the specific action plans, and thus leave space and also make it necessary for implementers to reify the policies in order to put them into practice. It may happen when the given policies are not well designed – for instance do not fit the implementers or the implementation environment – and thus implementers have to modify it to make it implementable or have a better effect. It may also happen, linked to the motivation factor discussed earlier, when implementers' objectives conflict with those of their order-givers and adequate supervision is not in place, and thus implementers may intentionally distort the initial policies. In either case, exercising discretion can be seen as a process of policy reshaping or even reformulating. The outcome of this reshaping process – can be good but also possibly harmful – and varies according to the specific context.

As mentioned earlier in defining 'implementation structure', multi-organizational implementation has become a prevailing phenomenon; that is, 'both the formulation and implementation of public policy increasingly involve different governmental levels and agencies, as well as interactions between public authorities and private organizations' (Hanf, 1978: 1). What is naturally inferred from this then is the need for *cooperation* among all the actors involved in order for a satisfactory implementation result. Cooperation could happen as kind of spontaneous pursuits of the implementers as long as there are certain objective/interest congruities in terms of conducting cooperation among the different implementers. As observed by Hanf (1978: 2), whilst admitting the difficulties of voluntary cooperation, 'indeed, much coordination results from the voluntary interactions among the individual units, without any conscious or deliberate steering by a more inclusive decision maker or, in some way, through the system as a whole'.

Cooperation problems, however, will arise when there is competition or even conflicts between the different implementers; or, even when there is a need for cooperation from one implementer, the demand may only be unilateral and thus the condition of 'exchange' is lacking for that cooperation to be able to take place. In addition, similar to the case for discretion, cooperation also implies certain requirements for the implementers' capability. To work as a team and meanwhile have a view to effectiveness is never an easy job. Collaborative problem-solving, for instance, requires the implementers to be adept at communication and trust building, among other public relations skills, and this tends to be even more necessary and also more demanding in cases of foreign policies where, aside from internal cooperation, the implementers also need to cooperate with their foreign counterparts.

III. Environment

Environment, or structure, in the sphere of social sciences, generally means the setting or context - tangible or intangible - wherein an agent acts and that would inevitably place certain constraints on the agent's behaviours. In the broadest sense, it can include all the factors that could possibly exert some sort of influence on an agent's behaviours (e.g. see Anderson, 1979: 27). *Environment* here, limited more specifically to the implementation environment of an external public policy, is defined as the setting/context wherein the implementation takes place and that could have effects on the implementers' behaviour. In the present analytical framework, two dimensions concerning the implementation environment of an external policy are to be looked at, i.e. static environment and dynamic environment[30].

Static environment indicates all sorts of (natural, political, economic, social, cultural) circumstances that are relatively stable within a period of time and may impose *constraints* on the implementation of a foreign policy. Such factors include, for instance, political culture, administrative structure, government efficiency, economic development level, civil society, culture and languages.

By contrast, *dynamic environment* focuses more on the role of actors (policymakers, implementers, or locals of the target country) and their actions (internal politics

[30] Other variables being discussed in the PPI literature include, for instance, "social-economic conditions and technology", "media attention to the problem", "public support", "attitudes and resources of constituency groups", "support from sovereigns", "distribution of natural resources", "fundamental socio-cultural values and social structure", "constitutional structure/rules", "advocacy coalitions" (Sabatier and Mazmanian, 1980; Sabatier, 1986); "nature of public opinion", importance of the related policy issue, attitudes of elites, political parties and private interest groups (Van Meter and Van Horn, 1975); "policy target groups" (Elmore, 1985); and "social-economic context" (Winter, 1990).

within each group of those actors or interplay among different groups of actors) in affecting the implementation process of a foreign policy. It is worth noting that these actors do not have to have a direct link to the policy issue under implementation. The actions and interactions within and among the actors may happen independently of the implementation process, following their respective self-interest seeking agendas, but they relate to or engage with the policy implementation in certain ways[31]. This sort of environment is considered dynamic also in that it is not something, like the static environment, that policymakers and implementers could, to varying extent, foresee and thus prepare countermeasures for beforehand. Rather, it is often some circumstances that the implementers would be confronted with only after the policies have been put into practice, which therefore calls for improvisational coping solutions from the implementers This normally sets higher requirements, for instance, for the capability and discretion of the implementers.

1.6 Chapter Plan

The thesis consists of five chapters in total. The current chapter (**Chapter 1**) has provided the topic background and literature review of the so-called 'emerging donors' – or 'Southern development partners' as referred to in this thesis – in the past decade or so, developed the research questions concerning more specifically Chinese development cooperation in African agriculture, and introduced the methodologies and theoretical instruments adopted by the author.

Chapter 2 of the thesis will offer a historical review of Chinese agricultural development cooperation with Africa since the late 1950s, in order to help readers to better understand how the contemporary models have come into being. It will go through the three historical phases – respectively the 'earlier period' in the 1960–70s, the 'transition period' during the 1980–90s, and the 'new era' from the 2000s until the present time – which are characterized by different motives, modalities and institutional structures. The chapter will also give a special focus on China's foreign aid reforms, taking place between the 1980s and 90s, which have significantly informed the practice of China's current development cooperation. In the end of the chapter, it identifies three specific models embraced in China's contemporary 'development package' of agricultural cooperation with Africa: namely the 'traditional agro-aid', 'innovative agro-aid' and 'agribusiness' models.

Chapter 3 will endeavour to investigate the 'innovative agro-aid' model of Chinese development cooperation with Africa, particularly through examining the flagship project of Chinese ATDC (Agriculture Technology Demonstration Centre) on the continent. It will first introduce the objectives, actors and mechanisms of the ATDCs, along with their general developments since 2006, and then provide a detailed case study on one of the earliest and highly ranked ATDCs – the one in Mozambique. Based on the case study, the chapter will give a preliminary analysis as to the actual results of the ATDCs, mostly drawing on the fieldwork-based observations from the Mozambican case but also combining other ATDC cases according to primary and secondary sources.

[31] For example, suppose there are states A and B, the deterioration of bilateral relations between A and B in general may cause the implementation failure of on-going aid policies of A in B; or the anti-A resentment may be used as a campaign tool by the opposition party of B to attack its domestic ruling party, and thus lead to the termination of commercial policies of A in B.

Chapter 4 will follow on to look at another representative model that is currently adopted in Chinese agricultural development cooperation with Africa, the 'agribusiness model'. Similarly, the chapter will first introduce the model by exploring the motives, actors and modalities and then further unpack the model by examining four fieldwork-based case studies of Chinese agribusiness projects in Mozambique. These four cases bring to light different types of company actors (e.g. private/state-owned/mixed), governmental relations (both with the Chinese and Mozambican), investment fields (e.g. rice/cotton) and modalities (in terms of financing, production and processing). At the same time, they share, to varying degrees, similarities with each other, and thus provide a good basis for a comparative integrated analysis. In the end of the chapter, there will be a preliminary analysis as to the up-to-now results, especially problems, of China's 'agribusiness model' in Africa.

The last chapter (**Chapter 5**) will, on the basis of the historical and empirical research, respond to the research questions raised in the Introduction. It will first conclude from the historical review that how the status of being as a developing country has shaped the mentalities and modalities of Chinese agricultural aid and development cooperation with Africa. It will then summarise the three models of China's contemporary development cooperation in African agriculture and explain the logic of 'development package' behind. And most importantly, it will provide a synthesised explanation as to the problems appearing in the cooperation process by adopting the Public Policy Implementation approach introduced in Chapter 1. The contribution and limitation of the thesis as well as directions for future research will be provided in the very end of the chapter.

Chapter 2 Chinese Development Cooperation in African Agriculture: A Historical Review

As noted in the Introduction, China (as well as other development partners from the South) has had a parallel historical trajectory and as rich experience of engaging in international development cooperation as that of the Northern donors. This history – especially some essential continuities and shifts, and key guidelines that have been gradually established over the past half-century – has left an indelible imprint on the mentality and modality of China's contemporary development cooperation practice, explaining a lot about the much-debated distinctions between the Northern donors and Southern counterparts. However, one of the notable shortcomings of the existing research on development cooperation from the South, including that of China, is precisely a lack of a historical dimension. In light of this, the primary objective of the present chapter is to provide a historical review of Chinese development cooperation, with a typical case of that in African agriculture, thereby shedding some light on how the current modalities, and the 'development package' model in particular, have come into being.

China's agricultural development cooperation with Africa dates back to the late 1950s and divided roughly into three phases: the 'earlier period' in the 1960–70s, the 'transition period' in the 1980–90s, and the 'New Era' from the 2000s until the present time. The three phases of development cooperation are featured by different political and/or economic driving forces, diverse cooperation forms and evolving institutional structures in terms of management and implementation. Particularly important in this historical process are the foreign aid reforms starting from the 1980s, which have greatly informed the practice of Chinese development cooperation in the 'transition' and especially the current stage. This chapter, therefore, will unfold along this line and elaborate respectively on the three historical phases as well as the event of China's foreign aid reforms.

2.1 'Pure Aid': The Earlier Period of Chinese Development Cooperation in African Agriculture (1960–1970s)

Chinese agricultural engagement with Africa could be traced back to the late 1950s, and the first wave of it covers roughly the period from the 1960s to 1970s. That could be fairly regarded as a form of development cooperation and indeed to a certain degree was more similar to the ODA-style, or 'pure aid' type of development cooperation in the sense that it was official aid – in most cases through grants – with a primary aim to promote the agricultural development of African countries which was in a rather underdeveloped status and desperately in need of external assistance. That said, there were very strong political motivations of the Chinese side behind the agricultural cooperation. That was a time for the PRC (People's Republic of China), to fight for its regime survival and international recognition. The PRC was then confronted with tremendous challenges and difficulties in face of the comprehensive blockade imposed by the West against the Cold War background. In particular, with the deterioration of foreign relations with the Soviet Union 'brother' since the late

1950s, building a broad alliance with African and other Third World[32] countries gradually developed into an integral part of China's diplomatic strategy with the aim of countering the threats from both the Soviet and Western blocs (Fu, 2008).

It is within this broader context that China-Africa agricultural cooperation started to unfold. China began to develop diplomatic relations with African countries and also provided aid to the continent after the Bandung Conference in 1955 (State Council of the PRC, 2011). Agricultural aid, due to its widespread popularity among African leaders (Jiang, 2013), soon became an important and widely adopted instrument in China's dealings with African relations. In 1959–60 China donated 15,000 tons of rice to Guinea at the request of the Guinean president, which signified the start of Chinese agricultural aid towards Africa. This deserves attention given the fact that China itself was suffering a severe famine during 1959–1961, and thus further demonstrates the urgency and significance of expanding international space to the Chinese government at that time. In October 1959, the two countries established formal diplomatic relations and Guinea became the first state in the sub-Sahara Africa that recognized the PRC (Xiao, 2002; Meng, 2013). In 1964, a new agency, the Bureau of Foreign Affairs, was set up under the Chinese Ministry of Agriculture to take specific charge of the country's foreign agricultural aid issues, indicating the beginning of the institutionalisation of agricultural aid in China (Jiang, 2013; Tang, et al., 2014). Throughout the 1960s, there were about seven countries[33] in Africa who had received agricultural aid from China (Shi, 1989; Bräutigam, 1998; Jiang, 2013).

Entering the 1970s, the scale of Chinese agricultural aid in Africa was massively increased. Apart from the consideration of solidarity and allying with African states, another key factor at play was the competition with Taiwan (also known as the Republic of China on Taiwan) in Africa. With the help of the United States, Taiwan had successfully provided agricultural aid to African countries since the 1960s. As a result, many of these countries felt hesitant to expel the Taiwanese 'farming teams', as requested by the Chinese government during the negotiation process for establishing diplomatic relations with the PRC. To overcome this obstacle, the then Chinese Premier Zhou Enlai assured the African leaders that China would take over all the agricultural aid projects left by Taiwan and promised to do a better job than the latter. This led to the so-called 'replacement aid (*dingti yuanzhu*)' which involved 18 African countries[34] and lasted for 13 years during the period 1970–1983. By the time the 'replacement aid' ended, China had replaced almost all the agro-aid projects left by Taiwan except for those in Côte d'Ivoire and Malawi (Shi, 1989; Jiang, 2013).

[32] The 'Third World' here is used in the sense of Mao Zedong's Three Worlds theory, indicating the majority of African, Asian (except for Japan, including China itself) and Latin American countries during the period of Cold War, whereas the First World indicating the then superpowers, the Soviet Union and United States, and Second World the lesser powers including European countries, Canada, Australia, Japan (Mao, 1974). This usages is different from some other Western tradition of categorizing, for instance, that regards the United States and its NATO allies as the First World, the Soviet Union and its communist allies (including China) as the Second World, and those unaligned, often with colonial pasts, such as many of the African, Latin American, Asian and Oceanian countries as the Third World (e.g. see Sauvy, 1952). The latter usage is also adopted in the following section of this chapter (4.1.2).
[33] Guinea, Mali, Mauritania, Congo-Brazzaville, Tanzania, Zambia and Somalia.
[34] Sierra Leone, Ruanda, Ghana, Togo, Congo-Kinshasa, Senegal, Benin, Gambia, Chad, Mauritius, Gabon, Nigeria, Niger, Madagascar, Central Africa, Liberia, Botswana, Burkina Faso.

All through the first two decades of Chinese agricultural aid in Africa, complete projects[35] such as farms (Table 2-1), agro-technology experiment and extension stations, irrigation and other agro-infrastructure were the most common types of aid projects. In total, China aided around 25 African countries with more than 100 or so agricultural complete projects, reclaiming over 40,000 hectares of farmland (mostly for food crops and sugarcane) (Shi, 1989; Yun, 1998). Meanwhile, thousands of Chinese agricultural experts and technicians were dispatched alongside the different projects to provide the locals with technical support and training (Shi, 1989; Jiang, 2013). In addition, China also offered large donations of foodstuff and agricultural materials (Shi, 1989; Li et al., 2010). All these abovementioned project-type, technical and materials assistance were conducted through donations by Chinese government, and rarely associated with any other economic activities. This 'pure aid', as termed by some Chinese scholar (Yun, 2000a), was indeed quite similar to the Northern concept of ODA given some of its key features such as the official nature, concessionality and non-tying feature, except for one significant distinction which is the non-conditionality[36]. There was only one political condition attached to Chinese aid, including agro-aid, to Africa in the early days – that is to recognize the PRC as the one and the only one legitimate government of China. Again, this sole condition along with the 'purity' nature of Chinese earlier (agro-) aid clearly reflects the status, needs and thus priorities of the Chinese government at that time.

Table 2-1 Examples of Chinese-aided Farms in Africa (1960-70s)[37]

Country	Project *(Year of Establishment)*
Tanzania	Wubenjia and Lufu Farm *(late 1960s)*; Mubalali Farm *(1977)*
Mali	Two sugarcane farms *(1970, 1976)*
Mauritania	Mupoli Farm *(1972)*
Uganda	Qibenba Farm *(1976)*
Congo-Brazzaville	Gongbei Farm *(1976)*
Congo-Kinshasa	Two sugarcane farms *(late 1970s)*
Sierra Leone	A sugarcane farm *(1981)*
Guinea	Keba Sugarcane Farm *(1982)*
Somalia	Feinuoli Farm *(1987)*

Source: The author based on Shi, 1989; Yun, 2000b; Jiang, 2013.

From an institutional perspective, these earlier agro-aid programmes were all financed and deployed by the central Chinese government, particularly through the Ministry of Agriculture, and implemented by the Departments of Agriculture at the provincial level alongside their government-affiliated institutions (Shi, 1989; Yun, 2000a; Tang et al., 2014). Entering the 1970s, with a sharp increase of agro-aid projects due to the 'replacement aid' initiative, provincial governments were

[35] 'Complete project' is a term used by Chinese government to refer to the type of foreign aid project that involves project engineering and construction, equipment and facilities provision, and post-construction service (MOC of the PRC, 2015).
[36] According to the authors' interviews with several Chinese elderly diplomats in Africa, the long-held 'non-conditionality' principle is deeply rooted in Chinese government's respect for the UN Chapter and the Bandung Spirit in terms of respecting other countries' sovereignty. Apart from that, the unhappy experience with Soviet Union trying to intervene Chinese domestic affairs in the late 1950s did not only directly lead to the 'breakup' of the two countries but also reconfirm the 'non-interference' principle in PRC's diplomatic thinking and practice (Niu, 2010).
[37] Due to the lack of and difficult access to some historical documents, especially those from the respective African countries, the names of the farms are presented uniformly in Chinese pinyin rather than their original languages.

mobilized and incorporated into the aid implementation process on a much larger scale (Shi, 1989; Xiao and Zhang, 2002). Overall, Chinese foreign aid, including agro-aid, in this early stage during the 1960-70s was delivered overwhelmingly by government agencies, central and provincial, through a strict top-down chain of command, which is largely in accordance with the country's then centrally planned economy system in general. With little management autonomy and a tightly controlled budget (thus little economic incentives), the front-line implementing staff tended to demonstrate limited proactivity in their daily work, which was believed to be responsible for the often-seen low efficiency of aid projects in that period (Shi, 1989).

China's earlier agricultural aid in Africa did help increase the food supply and boost the local economy in many of the recipient countries. The Mubalali Farm in Tanzania, for instance, used to produce one quarter of the whole country's rice supply by itself during the 1970-80s (Shi, 1989; Table 2-1). In Mali where China began to provide agricultural aid since 1961, the Chinese indeed started the country's history of producing and processing tea and sugarcane on its own, thus helping providing local employment, increasing government revenue and saving foreign exchange of the country that is used to import sugar (Wang, 2000; Han, 2011); the sugarcane factories, as to be picked up again later (Chapter 2.3), are still currently operational after almost six decades. However, one of the major problems concerning China's earlier agricultural aid in Africa is that most of those aid projects was not sustainable. As observed by Yun (2000a), while almost all the agro-projects achieved initial success upon completion, they could barely survive for long after being transferred to the recipient governments (Yun, 2000a; Li et al., 2010). In the case of Sierra Leone, for example, only two years after the Chinese experts left, all the ten farms were flourishing with weeds (Bräutigam, 2009). Other similar cases were common at that time[38] (Shi, 1989; also see Chapter 2.3). On top of others, the lack of technical, managerial and financial capability on the African (government) side was believed to be a main reason. Besides, the mechanized farming modality required by some of the Chinese-aided farms was also considered beyond the actual economic and productivity level of the African countries (Cai, 1992; Sun, 1996; Zhou and Wang, 1997).

2.2 The Foreign Aid Reforms

After three decades of efforts, especially with the re-entry into the United Nation and the normalization of relations with the United States in the 1970s, the external environment of the PRC could been seen as much improved, either compared to the rather vulnerable period as a newly formed regime in the 1950s or the most hostile decade of the 1960s when it had to 'fight on two fronts' with both the Soviet Union and the US. By the end of 1979, China had established formal diplomatic relations with 120 countries around the world, including those from the Soviet, Western blocs and the non-aligned Third World[39] (MOFA of the PRC, n.d.), and thus became an

[38] It is worth noting that this 'non-sustainability' problem was not only seen in Chinese agro-aid projects in Africa, but indeed a common problem that was also widely observed in other Western countries' aid efforts in African agricultural sector (Eicher, 2003).

[39] The 'Third World' here, different from that in the context of Mao's 'Three Worlds' theory (Chapter 2.1), is used in the Western tradition of categorizing that regards the United States and its NATO allies as the First World, the Soviet Union and its communist allies (including China) as the Second World,

increasingly recognized and matured player in the international arena. The strategic needs for providing foreign aid, especially in exchange for international political support as conducted in the earlier period of 1950-60s, was hence relatively reduced.

What is equally, if not more important, is the launch of the Reform and Opening Up policy in 1978. With the end of the disastrous 'Cultural Revolution', the CPC finally shifted its domestic policy priority from 'class struggle' to the country's economic development, which was regarded, as put by Deng Xiaoping (1980), 'the principal condition for solving all the problems [of China] both at home and abroad'. The 'domestic economy' factor, accordingly, also began to be put onto China's diplomatic agenda and has since gained increasing weight for itself. This can be seen, starting from the 1980s until now, from both the diplomatic efforts carried out with the aim of creating a peaceful and favourable external environment to guarantee China's domestic economic development, and more importantly, the growing number of economic issues and commercial objectives that have entered the country's foreign policy agendas, including that of Chinese foreign aid (see Chapter 2.4).

Furthermore, the Chinese foreign aid *per se* was also facing problems. The increasingly overstretched trend of aid-giving in the 1960-70s, strongly influenced both by the political needs and communist ideology of proletarian internationalism, and ironically, the diplomatic setbacks and relation deterioration with some socialist 'brother countries' who had been receiving large amount of Chinese aid for decades, caused the Chinese government to reflect upon its earlier aid practice (Xiao and Zhang, 2002; Zhou, 2008; Shu, 2009). Meanwhile, some practical problems, such as the lack of efficiency, profitability[40] and sustainability of Chinese aid projects were also being gradually acknowledged to the realisation that change was needed (Shi, 1989; Yun, 2000a).

Against all these factors, a series of reform measures started to be introduced first in the 1980s and then in the mid-1990s by the Chinese government. Some of the most relevant policy changes, especially those that would help understand the evolving practice of Chinese agricultural development cooperation with Africa under discussion, will be presented as follows: namely the normalization of aid scale, the improvement of aid performance, the emphasis on mutual development.

2.2.1 Normalization of Aid Scale

While still acknowledging the strategic significance of aiding the Third World countries, a broad consensus was finally achieved among the Chinese leadership around the early 1980s that aid should be given according to China's own actual strengths (Shi, 1989). As commented by Deng Xiaoping (1978),

> We are still very poor and cannot do much in terms of proletarian internationalism at the moment. We may be able to contribute more to mankind, especially the Third World, when we realize the Four Modernizations and have a stronger national economy in the future.

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and those unaligned, often with colonial pasts, such as many of the African, Latin American, Asian and Oceanian countries as the Third World (e.g. see Sauvy, 1952).

[40] Here, the 'profitability' refers mostly to the ability of the aid projects to bring economic benefits to *the African locals,* which is different from the more *self-interested* profit-seeking motive as growingly seen in the Chinese aid practice later on (particularly from the 1990s on) after the foreign aid reform.

In line with this, the Chinese government made a series of cost-effective adjustments to the aid-giving practice, particularly during the 1980s when the government had a relatively tight budget. These adjustments included, for instance, strengthening aid-provision towards the least developed countries, increasing medium/small-sized society-oriented projects (e.g. agricultural demonstration bases, hospitals and schools) and symbolic projects (e.g. conference centres, stadiums), and accordingly reducing large-scaled productive projects (Shi, 1989; Zhou, 2008; State Council of the PRC, 2011). As a result, the aid scale was dragged back to a more acceptable level, with the share of aid in the government fiscal expenditure falling from the record high of 6-7% in the 1960-70s to, for instance, 0.06% in 1980-81 (Zhou, 2008; Yang and Chen, 2010)[41].

This aid scale readjustment, driven partially by the constrained economic power of China at that time but more importantly by the changes of the country's strategic needs behind, shows how its identity as a developing country would affect its foreign development cooperation behaviours: the limited resources it possesses would have to be balanced towards the more urgent policy priority – for China in the 1980s, the domestic economic development accordingly. At least at that stage, China by no means possessed the necessary strengths to keep an independent development cooperation agenda as that of the Northern donors which was claimed to be more recipient-oriented and less influenced by donors' self-interests.

2.2.2 Improvement of Aid Performance

However, the efforts of trying to reduce the scale of aid provision did not indicate, as already noted, that the significance of foreign aid was downplayed, nor did it mean that the aid effectiveness could be compromised. Rather, the aim was to 'use the limited foreign aid funds to achieve the best results' (MOFET of the PRC, 1983). Particularly, in face of the problems such as the abovementioned lack of efficiency, profitability and sustainability of China's earlier aid projects, specific measures were taken with an express purpose of enhancing the aid performance. Two of the measures that are notably relevant are discussed as follows: the introduction of 'contract and responsibility system', and the strengthening of post-construction engagement.

First, the '*contract and responsibility system*'[42] was introduced to the foreign aid and development cooperation area from 1983. Different from the previous government-dominated approach of delivering aid projects, according to the new system, aid projects were contracted to state-owned enterprises (SOEs) and government-affiliated institutions (shiye danwei), while the government agencies were only in charge of the macro-planning and supervising of the projects. By separating aid planning and implementation, particularly through allowing for more autonomy and economic incentives of the implementing entities, the system was supposed to help improve the operational efficiency of Chinese foreign aid (Shi, 1989). It is, however, worth noting that at this stage the aid work contracted to SOEs or government institutions was still

[41] Even with a dramatic increase of foreign aid in absolute terms in the past two decades (1990s-present), the proportion of that to the total government fiscal expenditure has remained reasonably under 1% over the same period (Li and Wu, 2009; State Council of the PRC, 2014).
[42] The 'contract and responsibility system' was first adopted in the rural reforms of China since the late 1970s and later gradually extended to other areas of the Reform.

largely revolving around infrastructure *construction* of the projects. The post-construction engagement (discussed below) was still of limited scale. It is from the 1990s onward that the contracted aid-implementing agencies became increasingly involved in the project *operation*.

Second, more emphasis was placed onto the *post-construction engagement*[43] in order to 'consolidate the aid effects' (MOFET of the PRC, 1984), or, in other words, to improve the project sustainability. The Chinese aid workers had, until then, showed great caution in engaging with post-construction operations, especially concerning project *management* matters for fear of being thought to intervene in the internal affairs of the aid recipient countries. In face of the often-seen unsustainability problem (Chapter 2.1), however, the Chinese government began to realize that it was necessary to step up the post-construction engagement, both in terms of *technical* and *managerial* cooperation – which, as reassured by the then Premier Zhao Ziyang, should 'not be taken as intervention, but to help them [African countries] achieve self-dependence' (Zhao, 1982 cited in Shi, 1989).

Specifically, the *technical cooperation*, which had been practiced since the 1960s, normally involved provision of technical support and training to the locals, and at times, establishment of technical and management regulations and/or systems for the aid projects with the assistance of the dispatched Chinese experts. This type of cooperation generally took place after the project construction was completed and usually lasted one to two years unless being requested by the recipient countries for a longer period. The *managerial cooperation*, on the other hand, was a new trend in China's aid practice, starting only after 1983 (Shi, 1989). It required, to varying degrees, participation of the Chinese staff in the day-to-day management of the aid projects. This involvement manifested itself under different forms, such as managing aid projects on behalf of recipient countries, lease management and joint ventures (State Council of the PRC, 2011). In practice, these two methods were often combined together, that is, the Chinese agro-expert groups would provide both technical and managerial support to the recipient countries.

It is worth noting that, although the abovementioned reforms in aid modalities were initially introduced mostly for the consideration of aid performance improvement, measures such as incorporating company actors and encouraging post-construction engagement also smoothed the way for further, more commercially-oriented aid reforms forthcoming in the mid-1990s (Chapter 2.2.3). As will be shown in the following sections, with the 'mutual development' idea gaining more confirmation from the leadership and being increasingly applied in the real development cooperation practice, a number of aid projects that incorporated post-construction engagement, especially that of management cooperation, naturally transformed to agribusiness projects (often in the form of joint venture) in the 'transition period', and finally converged into the so-called 'agribusiness model' in the 'New Era' after 2000 (Chapter 2.3&2.4).

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[43] It was originally termed by the Chinese government as 'post-construction technical assistance' (Shi, 1989). To avoid confusion with another phrase, 'technical cooperation', which is to appear and going to be repeatedly mentioned from this paragraph on, the author uses 'post-construction engagement' instead of 'post-construction technical assistance' but indicates the same meaning.

2.2.3 Emphasis on Mutual Development

Indeed, the principle of 'equality and mutual benefit' was proposed as early as Premier Zhou Enlai visited Africa in 1964, whereby it was already attenuated that 'China does not regard aid as an one-side donation, but rather that, aid is reciprocal' (Zhou, 1964). However, in practice, as seen in the case of Chinese agro-aid during the 1960-70s, the Chinese government did not make own development, especially in economic terms, a major pursuit in its aid-giving process towards Africa. Against the background of foreign aid reforms in the early 1980s, the then Premier Zhao Ziyang, proposed a new 'Four Principles of Conducting Economic and Technical Cooperation with African countries' [44], which therefore reinforced Zhou's statement by emphasizing reciprocal benefits and mutual development, and more importantly involved the pragmaticism entailed by Deng Xiaoping's reform spirit by highlighting the necessity of adopting diverse forms and pursuing actual effects. Ten years later in 1994, with the deepening of Chinese reform process, Wu Yi, the then Minister of Commerce of China, further introduced the 'Grand Economic and Trade Development' policy that aimed to boost the domestic economy through combining diverse types of economic activities – such as international trade, foreign investment, foreign contracting and labour cooperation, utilization of external capital, as well as foreign aid – and seeking a synergetic effect among them. Until then, the self-development dimension and thus the mutual development role of aid, could be seen as having gradually acknowledged and established by the Chinese leadership.

A very important progress occurring at this time was the emergence of so-called 'development package' at mid-1990s. That is, China intentionally started to promote the combination of aid, trade, investment and other possible economic forms with an express mutual development objective to boost both the economies of recipient countries and that of China itself (Liang and Wang, 1995). This marks the moment when Chinese development cooperation began to go beyond mere aid but to embrace all possible forms that could effectively promote development and especially economic development and importantly, that of both sides. To give one example, Chinese aid projects were in most cases contracted to Chinese companies and accompanied by export of Chinese equipment and labour, thus paving the way for the 'Going Out' strategy 1995 (Zhou, 2010; Zhou, 2013; Luo, 2014). This sort of 'tied aid', however, is precisely what the traditional Northern donors have been trying to avoid or reduce in their aid-giving practice in the past two decades or so (Clay et al., 2009).

In tandem with the 'development package', China also started to increasingly mobilize capital resources from market, instead of only from the government fiscal system, and channel it into the development cooperation area[45]. From 1995, the Chinese government started to provide Government *Medium/long-term Concessional Loan* to aid-recipient countries via the newly established Export-Import Bank of China (State Council of the PRC, 2011). Later, since the 2000s, the EXIM bank also

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[44] Include 'equality and reciprocal benefits', 'pursuing actual effects', 'diversity of cooperation forms', and 'mutual development'.

[45] While these methods have tremendously scaled up the aid funds, they have also caused confusion as to how to distinguish aid from investment projects as well as how to calculate the amount of Chinese aid. In practice, while all the projects using the government concessional loans tend to be regarded as aid projects, only the part subsidized by the government for the discounted interests would be counted as aid (Zhou, 2008).

began to offer *Preferential Export Buyers' Credit* (together with the Government Concessional Loan, referred to as 'two preferential loans' hereinafter). The two preferential loans are made 'concessional' through lower interest subsidized by the Chinese government. Also, through the different types of 'management cooperation' over aid projects, as discussed earlier (Chapter 2.2.2), the self-owned capital of companies has been becoming another important financing source of Chinese external development cooperation projects.

2.3 Consolidation and Transformation: The Transition Period of Chinese Agricultural Development Cooperation with Africa (1980s–1990s)

With the completion of the 'replacement aid' phase and the launch of the foreign aid reforms, from the early 1980s onward, Chinese agricultural development cooperation with Africa entered what can be termed, notably in retrospect, as a 'transition period'. It is so called both because of relatively less clearer motives or development agenda compared to the earlier period, and also the transitional feature of cooperation forms from the 'pure aid' type gradually into mutual-benefit oriented business nature which is going to feature more prominently in the later phase (Chapter 2.4). While the foreign aid reforms had for the first time brought the idea of reciprocal benefit and mutual development into China's course of international development cooperation back to the early 1980s, a few factors effectively constrained this from being put into practice. The external economic interactions between China and Africa were still rather moderate and unbalanced given the constrained national power as well as the limited degree of 'opening' of China at that time. China's 'opening' before mid-1990s concentrated more on inward resource flows, that is, 'introducing in (yin jinlai)' different sorts of foreign resources such as capital, technology and indeed also increasing aid finances, but relatively less on outward movement especially in terms of financial flows. The main economic partners in terms of trade, investment as well as aid (with China as the FDI and aid recipient) then were largely Western advanced countries; Africa, on the other hand, particularly in the middle of the debt crisis and 'structural adjustments', could offer relatively less to China. Indeed, the economic drivers of Chinese development cooperation with Africa, including that in the agricultural area, did not become very evident until the turning of the new century.

Against this background, Chinese agricultural cooperation, still very much in the traditional aid form, in Africa then just continued to be delivered largely following the general reform directions, i.e. scale reduction, performance enhancement and commercial orientation (Chapter 2.2). Consolidation and gradual transformation of the earlier agro-aid projects, therefore, seemed to constitute the main themes of Chinese agricultural aid in Africa in this transition period. Accordingly, there were not many newly launched agro-aid projects or programs in this transition period. In terms of ***consolidation***, as mentioned in the earlier section, the Chinese government started to strengthen the more traditional technical cooperation and meanwhile introduce a new method, namely managerial cooperation, in the post-construction phase, in order to cope with the commonly experienced project unsustainability problem (Chapter 2.2). For example, at the request of the African side, the Chinese government sent back agro-expert groups to previously established farms (in the 1960-70s), such as those in Mali, Mauritania, Congo-Brazzaville, Sierra Leone. The aim was to help deal with the degradation problems occurring after the Chinese experts left and try to reinvigorate those aged projects through the provision of technical (and some managerial) support (Shi, 1989; also see Table 2-1). In Tanzania, for instance, in the case of the Chinese-aided Mubalali Farm, immediately after the completion of the project construction, an eight-year-long technical cooperation (1977-85) agreement was signed with the aim of consolidating the aid effects. The project entailed a much longer period of time, compared to the more common one to two years, but proved to have good results (Shi, 1989; also see Table 2-1). Apart from this case, some African governments, as seen in the case of Mali, Congo-Brazzaville and Sierra Leone, invited the Chinese experts to play the *main* role in the project management, asking them to take charge of all the important activities concerning the project operation (e.g. agro-production, sales, finances and labour management). The African governments, instead, played more a *secondary or supporting* role in this process (Shi, 1989).

Entering the 1990s, the deepening of the domestic market-oriented reforms, along with those enacted more specifically in the foreign aid area, provided opportunities for a gradual ***transformation*** of Chinese agricultural development cooperation in Africa. This mainly took two forms. The first form is a few newly launched agribusiness projects through utilising the 'two preferential loans'. This trend started mostly since the 1990s but developed only on a very limited scale at that time compared to that occurred in the 'New Era' particularly after 2006 (Chapter 4). Examples of these newly built agribusiness projects are, for instance, the sisal farm and rice farm set up in the 1990s in Tanzania and Guinea by the state-owned company CSFAC (China State Farms Agribusiness Corporation)[46]. Another form is the transformation of previous agro-aid projects into agro-investment projects.

A typical example of this second form of transformation is the case of the sugarcane project in Mali. China started to provide agricultural aid to Mali since the 1960s: in 1962 China successfully tested the growing of sugarcane in Mali, and then helped to build two sugarcane farms (1970, 1977) and two sugar mills (1966, 1976) in the country while providing several rounds of 'technical cooperation' (Chapter 2.2.2). However, the projects still fell into degradation after the Chinese agro-technical team left. The Chinese, therefore, were invited again in 1982 to go back to Mali and help revive the sugarcane projects. Soon after that, the Malian government decided in 1984 to combine the two sugarcane farms and two mills so to establish as a unified state-owned enterprise while the Chinese agro-experts were employed as the enterprise managers (i.e. 'managerial cooperation', see Chapter 2.2.2). This move proved to be very effective, not only greatly enhancing the project productivity and profitability but also contributing to the job creation and people's welfare in the local neighbourhood (Shi, 1989). One decade later, in 1996, the enterprise was further transformed into a joint venture, Complexe Sucrier Du Kala Superieur SA, with the Chinese state-owned CLETC[47] holding 60% of the share and taking the major responsibility of the company's management, and the Malian government holding 40% of the company's stake[48] (CLETC, n.d.). By then, the three-decade-long Chinese

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[46] For more details about this company and the relevant projects, see Chapter 4.1.2.

[47] CLETC is short for China Light Industrial Corporation for Foreign Economic and Technical Co-operation, which was established in 1983 and from then started to take over the agro-aid projects in Mali that had used to be undertaken by the then China's Ministry of Light Industry in the 1960-70s.

[48] Based on that, CLETC invested another sugar joint venture in Mali (CLETC 60%, Malian government 40%) in 2009.

agro-aid projects had finally developed into jointly owned agribusiness projects between China and Mali.

At least two lines of change were experienced in this process: first, the change of project implementing agencies from Chinese government (China's Ministry of Light Industry) to Chinese companies (CLETC); and accordingly, the change of motivations lying behind from a more politically driven to an increasingly business-oriented approach[49]. In a similar vein, Chinese-aided sugarcane projects in Sierra Leone (Table 2-1), Togo and Madagascar were also converted into agribusiness projects starting in the 1990s. These, however, operated on a lease management basis by COMPLANT[50], another Chinese state-owned enterprise.

Different from the 1960-70s when government agencies took a predominant role in the implementation process, with the introduction of the 'contract and responsibility system' (Chapter 2.2), from the 1980s onwards aid projects started to be contracted to company entities who thus gained increasing implementing power – first in the construction, later also in the operation phase. The government agencies, on the other hand, played more a supervising and coordinating role. The abovementioned CSFAC, for instance, was established under the then Ministry of State Farms and Land Reclamation (which later merged to form the Ministry of Agriculture) and took charge of a number of aid projects. At provincial levels, many Foreign Economic and Technical Cooperation Companies were established under provincial governments and mandated to carry out aid, including agro-aid projects, in other developing countries. That said, during the 1980–90s, only *state-owned* enterprises were allowed to participate in the delivery of government aid projects.

In terms of aid performance in this transition period (1980-90s), despite the measures taken according to the aid reforms, the thorny problem of project unsustainability still persisted. The 'success story' of the Mubalali Farm in Tanzania noted earlier did not continue after the eight-year-long technical and managerial cooperation came to an end, but gradually fell into disrepair as the Chinese agro-experts and workers left. The Mubalali Farm, together with Lufu, another Chinese-aided farm (Table 2-1), was finally sold out by the Tanzanian government in the early 2000s (ECCO in Tanzania, 2004a/b). A similar case is the agro-technology experiment station in Guinea, which was transferred to the Guinean government in 1982 but could not sustain on its own. In 1989, the Chinese government started to re-inject funds and re-send agro-experts in order to rehabilitate the station. These renewed efforts, however, only managed to sustain the station for another ten years – it shut down almost immediately after the Chinese left in 1999 (Yun, 2000b).

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[49] This latter change was a more progressive process. That is to say, the change of implementing agencies did not immediately bring about the change of motivations, for the former was a more direct reflection of the functional separation of government agencies and enterprises as required by the domestic market-oriented reforms, but the latter grew more evidently only as the reforms deepened and thus the companies, especially those state-owned enterprises, truly gained more autonomy and discretion over company operation matters rather than acting merely as a government instrument.

[50] COMPLANT is short for China National Complete Plant Import & Export Corporation, which was established in 1959 and had since played a predominant role in implementing Chinese government aid projects abroad.

2.4 Time For Mutual-Development: China-Africa Agricultural Development Cooperation in the New Era (2000s–present)

Over the years from the 1980s till the present time – from Deng through Jiang, Hu to Xi – the CCP has stuck firmly with its outward-oriented economic development policies and the efforts to restore China's global status. The 'Reform and Opening Up' policy, accordingly, remained among the top agenda of Chinese domestic and foreign policies, and grew even more profoundly in the 1990s featured by an increasing proactive posture in participating international economic dealings and finally the launch of 'Going Out' strategy around the 2000[51]. At the same time, though at a lesser pace, the African continent had also achieved steady economic growth and recovery particularly since the new millennium, thus positioning itself a better economic cooperation partner in the international arena. The past two decades, therefore, have witnessed a dramatic development of bilateral relations between China and Africa, especially in economic and commercial terms, with China's African policy acquiring an unprecedented economic dimension compared to all its earlier engagement with the continent through the 20th century. Particularly, the establishment of FOCAC (Forum on China-Africa Cooperation) since 2000 has been a significant milestone in contemporary China-Africa relations and served as a main catalyst, through its continual proposals and follow-up measures every three years, to push forward a comprehensive and sustained cooperation between the two sides.

From the agricultural perspective, more specifically, different from the previous two stages (Chapter 2.1&2.3), at least two new factors have opened opportunities for China and Africa to continue and deepen their agricultural cooperation. First, China's domestic agricultural sector has achieved a widely-renown success, which did not only ensure food security of 1.3 billion people, but also uplift millions of people from the extreme poverty (Huang, 2010; Li et al., 2013). This success story of Chinese own agriculture has put China in a favourable position in the agro-cooperation process with Africa, for it used to have similar starting point, face similar problems, and enjoy similar-level agricultural technology to those of Africa, and thus may possibly provide more suitable experiences to its African counterparts[52]. Second, while the largely stagnant development of African agriculture *per se* still remains an important concern for Chinese government, it also started to apply domestic agricultural policies to its development cooperation with African countries. Given a number of development challenges along with other medium/long-term pursuits[53],

[51] In 2001 the "Going Out" strategy was formally proposed and written into the country's 10th Five-year Plan of the National Economy and Social Development, which was further enriched in the 11th and 12th Five-year Plans in 2006 and 2011 respectively (People's Congress of the PRC, 2001, 2006 and 2011). Specifically, by promoting the "Going Out" strategy, the Chinese government actively encourages and supports the Chinese enterprises to conduct foreign project contracting and labour services cooperation; exploit foreign resources that are domestically lacked; conduct processing and trade abroad, create international marketing networks and brands; set up overseas Research & Development (R&D) agencies and design centres; conduct transnational operation and develop towards transnational companies. The core objectives of the "Going Out" strategy, therefore, are largely to gain access to foreign resources, markets and technology through primarily conducting FDI but also other modalities.

[52] That said, Chinese scholars have clearly realized that the success story and experiences may not be copied by African states for distinct policy environments and so on (Li et al., 2013).

[53] For instance, to strengthen the structural adjustment of China's agricultural industry and climb up the agribusiness global value chain.

China's agricultural sector has been increasingly opening up to the external world, welcoming and encouraging mutual exchange of products, capital, technology, and human resources. Around the year of 2006, Chinese government formally launched the 'Agriculture Going Out' policy that aims primarily at utilizing overseas agricultural resources (Chapter 4.1.1).

Against this context, the past one and a half decades since the new millennium have witnessed a new and high wave of agricultural cooperation between China and Africa, compared with the rather moderate, more 'consolidation'-oriented interactions two decades of the 1980-90s. At the policy level, agricultural development cooperation measures with Africa started to be detailed at the Beijing Summit of the 3rd FOCAC (2006). Since then they have been modified and strengthened at every FOCAC (2009, 2012, 2015), including the specific forum on agriculture (FOCAAC, 2010). Particularly, the four principles set up by Premier Zhao Ziyang finally began to be substantialized given a more mature point of time (Chapter 2.2.3). Inspired by the new mentalities, China's development cooperation practice in African agriculture, while maintaining certain continuity, has undertaken a great change since the 2000s. Most notable is the 'development package' adopted in the agricultural cooperation with Africa. There are three distinct models within the 'development package', respectively the '(technology-centred) traditional agricultural aid model', the 'innovative agricultural aid model' and the 'agribusiness model'.

In the first place, many traditional forms, often grant-funded types of agricultural aid (***'traditional agro-aid model'*** hereinafter), as practiced in the 1960-90s, still remain and constitute a significant part of China's contemporary agricultural development cooperation with Africa. Having said that, there has seen an important shift of focus from more 'complete project' oriented type of aid (Chapter 2.1) to that of increasingly 'technical assistance' centred. This has much to do with Chinese own experience in agricultural development in the past few decades. China established a comprehensive agro-technology extension system from as early as the 1950s, and by they year of 2015 technological advances had contributed more than 55% to the growth of China's agriculture (Yu and Wang, 2015). It is widely acknowledged that the utilization and dissemination of agro-technology has played an essential role in transforming the country's agricultural sector (Huang, 2010). In light of this, *technical assistance* has also been established as the cornerstone of China's current agricultural aid to Africa, which further takes a number of specific forms.

First, the Chinese government has launched a new round of expert dispatch. On the Beijing summit of FOCAC in 2006, China pledged to assign 100 senior agro-experts specializing in diverse areas to assist African countries with agricultural development (FOCAC, 2006). In 2009, it promised to send a further 50 agro-technical groups to the continent (FOCAC, 2009). The main task of the expert dispatch, as explained by the Ministry of Agriculture (MOA), is to 'participate in the formulation of aid-recipient countries' agricultural development plan, assist with the establishment of agricultural technology extension system, offer technological consulting and services for their agricultural production, and eventually enhance the capabilities for agricultural macro-control and self-development' (MOA of the PRC, 2008).

There have also been constant exchange and training programs held by Chinese MOA for African farmers, technicians, students, officials and others, either in China or the related African states. More than 20 different training programs in agro-technology and management are held every year. During the period 2004–2010, around 4,200 agro-technicians and managerial officials from Africa received this sort of training through both bilateral and multilateral channels[54] (MOA of the PRC, 2010). The China-Ethiopia Agricultural Vocational Education Program stands out as a typical example in this regard. From 2001 to 2010, China had sent more than 300 teachers to Ethiopia while around 66,000 local students been trained under the program; more importantly, this program has helped Ethiopia to establish from scratch its own agricultural vocational education system, building up in total about 28 training institutions all over the country (Li, 2010). In 2012, furthermore, the Chinese government proposed to help set up agricultural vocational education systems on the whole African continent (FOCAC, 2012).

In addition, China also provides technical support to African countries under diverse multilateral cooperation frameworks. For instance, China has played, since 1996, an active role in the South-South Cooperation (SSC) program, one of the Supporting Programs for Food Security launched by the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) of the UN. In 2006, a further partnership was established between China and FAO whereby China pledged to offer 30 million USD trust fund and dispatch 3,000 agro-technicians and experts between 2006–2012 to support the SSC program, with a prioritized focus on Africa (i.e. Ethiopia, Mauritania, Ghana, Nigeria, Mali, Sierra Leon, Gabon) (Han, 2011). Also, China has been working together with the Northern donors, especially the DAC under the OECD. In 2009, for instance, a study group between China and OECD-DAC was set up with a primary goal of facilitating mutual learning on poverty reduction among developing countries (China-DAC, 2009). In the agricultural sector specifically， the group has conducted a series of research with a view to transferring the successful experience of agricultural development in China to the African continent (China-DAC, 2011).

Despite a particular focus on technical assistance, other more traditional forms such as *infrastructure and materials support* remain an integral part of Chinese agricultural aid to Africa. For example, in terms of agricultural infrastructure, by the end of 2009, China had helped build 215 agricultural ‘complete projects’, including 168 general agro-projects (such as farms and technology extension stations) and 47 irrigation projects, in different developing countries. Most of these projects are located in Africa, with a large part of them being built during the early years between the 1960-90s though (State Council of the PRC, 2011; Li, 2010). Some more recent examples include, for instance, the Chinese-aided grain barns in Zambia and the rice-processing factories in Mozambique. On a yearly basis, the Chinese government also earmarks a certain amount of funds for purchasing agricultural materials for African countries, including agro-inputs such as seeds, fertilizers and pesticides, as well as small- and medium-sized farm implements and some agro-processing equipment. This sort of materials donation is often provided alongside other Chinese agro-aid projects, or separately upon request from the aid-recipient countries. Besides, China is also very active in providing emergency humanitarian aid to Africa. For instance, in 2011 the Chinese government donated 70 million USD and food to those famine-plagued countries in the Horn of Africa (Chinese Embassy in Tanzania, 2011); and

[54] For more fieldwork-based details and some critical views about Chinese agro-training programs for African agriculture, see Tugendhat, 2015.

according to the World Food Program (WFP) under the UN, China has been one of the leading contributors in the developing world (WFP, 2015).

The second model of Chinese contemporary agricultural development cooperation in Africa is termed as *'**innovative agro-aid model**'* in this thesis. It is so called because of its inherent dualistic nature; that is, on one hand it still resembles the 'traditional agro-aid model' in many respects and so that is often regarded as Chinese aid projects, but on the other hand, it has effectively brought in the idea of 'mutual development' to the practice of China's agricultural development cooperation through introducing some innovative mechanism design. Most typical of this would surely be the ATDCs (Agricultural Technology Demonstration Centres), the flagship project of China's agricultural development cooperation with Africa in the new millennium.

The ATDCs have been launched for more than one decade since the Beijing Summit of the 3rd FOCAC in 2006. As will be elaborated in Chapter 3, the ATDCs, at the first glance, are a combination of all the abovementioned agro-aid forms (agro-technology assistance, infrastructure support and materials donation). However, the incorporation of corporate actors as project implementing agencies and accordingly the expected commercial operation model in the mid-/long term, makes them essentially distinct from projects under the 'traditional agro-aid model'. This special design is very much in line with the 'mutual-development' idea, with both developmental and commercial implications. By 2012, there had been in practice at least 23 Chinese-funded ATDCs all over the African continent, with the first batch of 14 centres having finished construction and been transferred to the host governments, while 9 others still in the process of completing the feasibility study or construction.

Lastly, there is also the *'**agribusiness model**'* that features tapping into the potential of agribusiness investment in promoting the development of African agriculture. The developmental impact of agribusiness could be exerted in two ways. First, through the natural, spill-over effect of the development of agribusiness, particularly in terms of enhancing food security (when grain crops are concerned), boosting job creation and accordingly promoting poverty reduction. Second, through intentional, extra efforts that are made either by governments (through the PPP mechanism) or by companies themselves (out of CSR consideration) to further strengthening the developmental impact of agribusiness, such as the scaling up of projects through financial support from government or national banks or free training programs for agro-technology transfer provided spontaneously by companies. In line with the overarching guideline of pursuing mutual development and reciprocal benefits, the 'agribusiness model' also fits well in China's 'Agricultural Going Out' strategy that was launched in mid-2000s and with a clear view to stimulating Chinese companies' overseas agro-investment.

As will be further detailed in Chapter 4, by the end of 2011, Chinese agribusiness investment in Africa had amounted to around 400 million USD, with a diversity of Chinese companies – state and private, central- and provincial-level, agricultural and non-agricultural – involved across a number of different African countries. According to the author's own calculation, by 2016, there had been at least 100 or so Chinese agribusiness projects operating in Africa, with about 30 sizable ones that occupies up to at least 1,000 hectares. Most of these projects, as the typical examples of the newly emerging 'agribusiness model' started only from the recent decade.

As already shown above, from an institutional perspective, both the management and operational mechanism of Chinese agricultural development cooperation projects in the New Era (2000s-present) have undergone important changes. This is particularly notable at the operational level wherein an increasing diversity of non-governmental actors, especially companies, starts to actively engage in the enterprise of Chinese international development cooperation. However, despite the general image of greater efficiency and important financer that is often associated with corporate actors, their disparate motivations, capabilities, discretions and cooperative tendencies all potentially impose great challenges to their implementation results. Even at the management level, due to the growing agency awarded to non-governmental actors and some market-based mechanisms adopted such as that under the 'innovative agro-aid' and 'agribusiness model', it is becoming more and more challenging for Chinese government to exert effective control over the actual implementation and thus the ultimate outcomes of the new 'development package'. No less importantly, given the typical 'trial and error' nature of Chinese policy making, the country's development cooperation strategy *per se* is still largely a policy in-the-making, and thus will no surprisingly suffer from certain loopholes and immaturity.

The question, then, is how will the new and supposedly different (from the DAC-donors) 'development package' model of China's development cooperation perform? To what extent is it going to be more, or less, effective? And how will it be constrained by the aforementioned potential challenges? All these questioned will be examined in the following two empirical chapters (Chapter 3&4) and synthesized in the final conclusive chapter (Chapter 5).

Chapter 3 Development Cooperation in Agriculture: The Innovative Agro-aid Model

In the previous chapter, I have outlined the historical trajectory of Chinese half-century-long agricultural cooperation with Africa with the hope to demonstrate the roots and logics for its contemporary practice. I have also briefly introduced the three distinctive models of China's current development cooperation in African agriculture, and already expanded on the 'traditional agro-aid' model. The present chapter and the one that follows will examine, respectively, the 'innovative agro-aid' and the 'agribusiness' models that feature most prominently in the current phase of China-Africa agricultural cooperation. To start with, this chapter is going to first investigate the 'innovative agro-aid' model, and specifically, China's flagship ATDC (Agriculture Technology Demonstration Centre) project that stands out as the very epitome of this model.

As distinct from the earlier 'pure aid' period (1960-70s) and transition period (1980-90s), the agricultural cooperation in the new century entails more clearly the 'win-win, mutual-development' concept, combines both development and commercial objectives and activities, and accordingly involves a diversity of public and private actors. That said, as noted in Chapter 2, the evolution of Chinese international development practice has not only been a response to the changing priorities of the government's foreign policy in different time periods, but also a reflection of the more internally-driven process of China's foreign aid reforms. In this regard, the ATDCs, while clearly demonstrating certain historical continuity through a hybrid of agro-aid forms adopted before (e.g. farms, agro-technology demonstration/extension stations, experts dispatch), involve as well some of the mechanisms are intentionally designed to avoid problems experienced in the past few decades.

The ATDCs also differ from the 'agribusiness model' that is to be discussed in Chapter 4 where the corporate actors take a more proactive part while the government only an assisting role. The ATDCs, however, are still largely regarded as government aid projects, especially in the early stage of the centres, considering the evident financial and supervision responsibilities borne by the government, and the Chinese companies involved in theory only the implementing agencies. In line with this, the 'development' dimension is supposed to overweigh the 'commercial' one for the ATDCs; as will be shown later in more detail, the commercial gains are moderate in the near term, only in terms of business introduction, and even in the long run when the centres enter into fully commercial operations they are nonetheless still expected to perform 'public-interest functions'.

There are two parts in this chapter. The first part (Chapter 3.1) will introduce the objectives, actors and mechanisms of the ATDCs, along with their general developments since 2006. The second part (Chapter 3.2) will flesh out the ATDC story by providing a detailed case study on one of the earliest and highly ranked (by Chinese government) centres – the one in Mozambique. It will examine and evaluate the actual performance of the Mozambican ATDC in terms of the three key dimensions – respectively the technical transfer, business introduction and project sustainability – against the objectives set for the ATDCs by the Chinese government.

3.1 ATDC: The Flagship Project of China's Innovative Agro-Aid in Africa

The project of Agricultural Technology Demonstration Centre ('ATDC' hereinafter) was first proposed at the Beijing Summit of the 3rd FOCAC in 2006. The Chinese government pledged to build 10 ATDCs in different African countries (FOCAC, 2006). The number was then increased to 20 during the 4th FOCAC in 2009 (FOCAC, 2009). By 2012, there had been in practice at least 23 Chinese-funded ATDCs on the African continent, with the first batch of 14 centres having finished construction and been transferred to the host governments, while 9 others still in the process of completing the feasibility study or construction (Table 3-2).

3.1.1 Objectives: A Strong Mutual-Development Feature

In line with the 'core spirit' of China's contemporary (agro-)development cooperation with Africa (Chapter 2.2&2.4), the ATDCs have carried an evident feature of pursuing mutual-development objectives through the implementation of the projects. According to the key official document that guides the practice of the ATDCs ('ATDC Guidance' hereinafter), issued jointly by China's Ministry of Commerce (MOC) and Ministry of Agriculture (MOA), the purposes of the ATDCs were explained as follows (MOC and MOA of the PRC, 2011):

> I. To serve China's foreign strategy and promote bilateral relations with the recipient countries;
> II. To help increase grain production, improve agricultural technology, and enhance food security of the recipient countries;
> III. To provide a platform for Chinese companies to develop business in Africa, and promote China's 'Agriculture Going Out' policy;
> IV. To build the ATDC into a base for agro-technology experiment and research, demonstration and extension, human resources training, and display.

There is, first and foremost, a clear Africa-oriented development objective involved in the ATDCs. The limited input as well as the low level of agro-technology has been one of the biggest hindrances to the productivity enhancement of African agriculture, whereas in China the success story of agricultural development in the past decades has been greatly attributed to the rapid advancement of agro-technology underpinned by the government's accentuated efforts to strengthen agro-technology education, research as well as extension system across the country (Huang, 2010). An important objective of the ATDCs, therefore, is to promote the transfer of Chinese advanced agricultural technology to Africa through the realisation of the four tasks designed for the centre, namely demonstration, training, research, and display[55] (Objective IV), with an ultimate aim to help increase the grain production and thus enhance the food security of the recipient countries (Objective II). It is also hoped that by achieving these ends, the bilateral diplomatic relations between China and African countries could meanwhile be bolstered (Objective I). This dimension, therefore, is termed by the Chinese government as the 'public-interest function' of the ATDCs, for all the

[55] Among the four tasks, demonstration and training, mostly targeted at agricultural producers and technicians, are more central to the technology transfer purpose and therefore the main focus of the ATDCs. Research is more a supportive function that is often carried out alongside and closely serves the aim of demonstration and training. And display, open to the broader public, usually involves a general introduction to Chinese agro-technology and experience, among others (MOC and MOA of the PRC, 2011; Interview, 8 Nov 2013).

activities in this line are supposed to be non-commercial and purely for the developmental benefits of the recipient countries.

Particularly worth noting here is also Objective III, which differentiates ATDCs from those more traditional forms of Chinese agro-aid in Africa (Chapter 2.4), that is the intention of the project designers trying to make the ATDCs in the meantime a platform for Chinese agro-companies to 'go out' and conduct agribusiness abroad. The ATDCs, therefore, also serve the function of introducing Chinese companies to Africa and facilitating their agribusiness on the continent. This dimension, termed as 'business introduction' in this thesis, explicitly demonstrates the self-oriented development agenda entailed in the ATDC project; that is, more specifically, the seeking of business opportunities for Chinese companies. In addition to that, similar to the practice of other Chinese aid projects nowadays, the ATDCs are accompanied by, and also expected to promote, export of Chinese agro-equipment and materials[56], among other things (MOC and MOA of the PRC, 2012).

A last dimension that is not shown in the statement of purposes of the ATDCs but surely bears considerable significance in terms of the pursuits of the centres is the project sustainability concern. The sustainability issue derives from China's decades-long practice of agricultural aid on the continent (Chapter 2) and has been widely observed by practitioners and scholars (Shi, 1989; Cai, 1992; Sun, 1996; Zhou and Wang, 1997; Yun, 2000; Bräutigam, 2009). Almost all the Chinese earlier agro-aid projects could not escape the cycle that, no matter how successful the initial period of the project proved to be, the project would soon fall into disrepair once the Chinese team left[57]. In most cases, the reason for this resides in that the aid-recipient countries lacked the financial, managerial and technical capability to keep the projects going on their own (Shi, 1989; Cai, 1992; Sun, 1996; Zhou and Wang, 1997). Against this background, the sustainability issue was brought to the fore in the designing process of the ATDCs (Xu and Qin, 2011). The emphasis on sustainability can be seen from the performance evaluation system of the ATDCs, in which the planning and realization of sustainable development occupies 45% of the total scores, more than any other indicators (Table 3-1). And the sustainability concern *per se* is also for the benefits of both, a sustainable developmental effect for the recipient countries as well as 'value for money' for the Chinese side.

Table 3-1 Evaluation Indicators of the ATDC

Diplomatic Influence	Improvement of the Agricultural Development and Food Security of the Host Country	Promotion of China's 'Agriculture Going-out and Inviting-in' Policy	Sustainable Development
15%	25%	15%	**45%**

Source: The author based on the Evaluation Plan of the ATDC (MOC and MOA of the PRC, 2012).

[56] Most of these equipment and materials are donated by the Chinese government, and in most cases exempt from tariffs due to their aid nature.

[57] Few exceptions exist, for instance, in Mali and Sierra Leone, where the Chinese-aided agro-projects during the early years are still operational now; however, in these two countries, the projects have since been managed by the Chinese whereas the host governments act only as shareholders.

Table 3-2 Chinese Agriculture Technology Demonstration Centres in Africa

No	Host Country	Chinese Implementing Agent(s)	Operational Stages	Area (Ha)	Cooperation Fields
The 14 ATDCs that have been transferred to the host governments					
1	**Benin**	China National Agricultural Development Group Co., Ltd.	C: 2009–2010 T: 2010–2013 B: 2014–	51.6	Grains (e.g. maize), vegetables, livestock (e.g. chicken)
2	**Cameroon**	*Shanxi province* Shanxi State Farms and Land Reclamation Group Co., Ltd. *[TS: Northwest Agriculture and Forestry Technology University]*	C: 2009–2010 T: 2013–2016 B: 2016–	100	Rice, etc.
3	**Republic of Congo**	*Chinese Academy of Tropical Agricultural Sciences*	C: 2009–2011 T: 2012–2015 B: 2015–	59	Grains (e.g. maize, cassava), vegetables, livestock (e.g. chicken); fodder production and processing; agricultural mechanisation
4	**Ethiopia**	*Guangxi province* Guangxi Bagui Agricultural Science and Technology Co., Ltd. *[TS: Guangxi Agricultural Vocational College]*	C: 2010–2012 T: 2012–2015 B: 2015–	52	Grains, vegetables, and livestock (e.g. pigs, cows and chicken)
5	**Liberia**	*Hunan province* Longping High-tech Agriculture Co., Ltd.	C: 2009–2010 T: 2010–2014 B: 2014–	32.6	Hybrid rice, etc.
6	**Mozambique**	*Hubei province* Lianfeng Overseas Agricultural Development Co., Ltd.	C: 2009–2010 T: 2012–2015 B: 2015–	52	Grains (e.g. maize and rice), vegetables, livestock (e.g. pigs); agro-processing
7	**Rwanda**	*Fujian province* *Fujian Agriculture and Forestry University*	C: 2009–2011 T: 2011–2014 B: 2014–	22.6	Grains, mulberry plantation and silkworm keeping, jun-cao cultivation, water-conservancy
8	**South Africa**	China National Agricultural Development Group Co., Ltd. *[TS: Chinese Academy of Fishery Sciences]*	C: 2009–2011 T: 2014–2017 B: 2017–	0.47	Freshwater aquaculture
9	**Sudan**	*Shandong province*	C: 2009–2011	65	Grains (e.g. wheat, maize), vegetables,

10	**Tanzania**	*Chongqing Municipality* Chongqing Seed Group Co., Ltd. *[TS: Chongqing Academy of Agricultural Sciences]*	C: 2009–2010 T: 2011–2014 B: 2015–	62	Grains (e.g. rice, maize, soybeans), vegetables, flowers, livestock (e.g. chicken)
11	**Togo**	*Jiangxi province* Huachang International Economic and Technical Corporation	C: 2009–2011 T: 2012–2015 B: 2015–	10	Rice, maize, etc.
12	**Uganda**	*Sichuan province* Huaqiao Fenghuang Group, Co., Ltd.	C: 2009–2010 T: 2011–2014 B: 2015–	0.3	Freshwater aquaculture
13	**Zambia**	*Jilin province* *Jilin Agriculture University*	C: 2010–2011 T: 2012–2015 B: 2015–	120	Grains (e.g. wheat, maize, soybeans), vegetables; agricultural mechanisation
14	**Zimbabwe**	*Chinese Academy of Agricultural Mechanization Sciences* (Menoble)	C: 2009–2011 T: 2012–2015 B: 2015–	109	Agricultural mechanisation and irrigation
The 9 ATDCs that are still under negotiation or construction					
15	**Angola**	Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps	Memorandum of Understanding singed in 2012		
16	**Central Africa Republic**	TBC	Memorandum of Understanding singed in 2012		
17	**Cote d'lvoire**	TBC	Feasibility study conducted in 2012		
18	**Democratic Republic of the Congo**	ZTE Energy	Foundation ceremony held in 2012		
19	**Equatorial Guinea**	Ganliang Co., Ltd.	Feasibility study conducted in2011		
20	**Eritrea**	Shanghai Foreign Economic & Technological Cooperation Group Co., Ltd.	Feasibility study conducted in 2012		
21	**Malawi**	China Africa Cotton Co., Ltd.	Foundation ceremony held in 2012		
22	**Mali**	Zijinhua Co., Ltd.	Agreement signed in 2012		
23	**Mauritania**	Mudanjiang Yanlinzhuanyuan Technology Co., Ltd.	Foundation ceremony held in 2012		

Source: The author based on media reports and fieldwork, updated by 2015.

(C: Project Construction, T: Technology Cooperation, B: Business/Commercial Operation, TS: Technical Support)

3.1.2 Actors: Government-Firm Cooperation

In most cases, the ATDCs were run by Chinese agro-companies[58]. While entirely new for the Chinese government to incorporate company actors projects, which could be traced back to the 1980s, it is something new hc have private firms involved, such as in the ATDCs in Ethiopia, Liberia a (Table 3-2). Considering the origin of this type of practice, the primary re including company actors are for greater efficiency and sustainability of th (Chapter 2.2&2.3). To be qualified to operate and manage an ATDC, the cc in principle, have to be national or provincial-level leading agro-companies which should have strong financial, managerial, and technical capabilities (I MOA of the PRC, 2011). The companies need to go through a bidding though this is not fully open or competitive, given that the local and centra governments have significant influence over the decision-making (Tang et al

While the companies are the main role players in the daily manageme ATDCs, government actors especially those from the Chinese side still tak responsibility in planning, supervising, and particularly in the first three ye project, financing the operation of the ATDCs. The Ministry of Commerc and the Ministry of Agriculture (MOA) are the most involved cer government actors on the Chinese side. They cooperatively macro-plan, faci supervise the ATDC project. In most cases, each of the ATDC-hosting co twinned with one specific province (or provincial-level city) in China (Tabl designated by the central government. Apart from providing general supp project-implementing company, the local Chinese governments are also ex play a leading role in promoting agro-companies from their province to inv twinned African country (MOC and MOA of the PRC, 2011). On the recip various counterpart government agencies are also involved in the implemen the ATDCs, but played only an assisting role.

Comparatively, the government-firm cooperative form as shown in the ATI certain similarity to the PPP (Public-Private-Partnership) model that recently in the Northern development cooperation field (Chapter 1.2). It is similar to model for its inclusion of partnership with a range of non-public actors, typ private companies but also other sorts of corporate and/or non-for-profi (Table 3-2). It, however, could be regarded at best as a sort of c arrangement. That is firstly because business model – the defining f 'development PPP' – is only visible in the final 'Commercial Operation Sta ATDCs (Chapter 3.1.3). And secondly, the non-public actors involved in th play to a much lesser extent a role of 'resource partner' that is ofte emphasized in the Northern development PPP model; in the ATDC project, the non-public actors act largely as the 'implementers' of the government pr it still remains to see whether and to what extent they would put in more r particularly in financial terms, in the 'Commercial Operation Stage'.

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[58] There are also several cases, for instance, in Congo, Rwanda, Zambia and Zimbabwe (see 2), that the ATDCs are run by Chinese universities or research institutes. They sometimes al a company under their names to operate the Centre.

3.1.3 Modalities: A Mix of Technical Assistance and Business Model

Corresponding with the multi-dimensional motives and the diversity of actors involved in the ATDCs are the mixed modalities that combine both more traditional aid form of agro-technical assistance as well as an innovative element of commercial operation. Each ATDC has three operational stages: Project Construction Stage, Technical Cooperation Stage and Commercial Operation Stage. The Project Construction Stage normally takes about one year. While the host governments need to offer the required logistical support such as providing land, electricity and water, the Chinese side is in charge of the construction of infrastructure, as well as the provision of any needed agro-equipment and materials. In most cases, the construction is contracted to Chinese companies, but involves employment of local workers in the host countries. The majority of the fees incurred in this stage are paid by the Chinese government, averaged at about 40 million RMB (approx. 660,000 USD) for each of the ATDCs. (MOC and MOA of the PRC, 2011; the author's fieldwork)

Once the construction is completed, the ATDCs are transferred to the host governments and become the state assets of the latter. This also usually indicates the commencement of the three-year Technical Cooperation Stage. The main tasks for the ATDCs in this stage are to perform the four 'public-interest functions' as mentioned earlier, i.e. agro-technology research, demonstration and extension, training and display. A Chinese technical team is assigned to the ATDC to undertake these tasks. Moreover, in fulfilment of the 'business introduction' objective, the centre also acts as a platform for Chinese agro-companies, who are seeking agribusiness opportunities into the host country. This latter dimension is fundamental because through it the centre starts planning and setting the basis for the succeeding Commercial Operation Stage. To do that, many of the ATDCs set up small-scale agribusinesses based on the Centre in preparation for the business-oriented operation in the future (MOC and MOA of the PRC, 2011; the authors' fieldwork). In this stage, the implementing companies designated by the Chinese government take the lead in managing the centres on the daily basis. Financially, the Chinese government covers most of the Centres' daily operations, including the funds needed to carry out the routine activities such as agro-research, demonstration and training, as well as the salary of the Chinese staff (MOC and MOA, 2011; the author's fieldwork). The host governments instead play a facilitation role in this stage, assisting, to varying degrees, with the technical and management issues and also sharing a small part of the financial responsibility (The author's fieldwork).

After the three-year technical cooperation ends, the ATDC then enters the Commercial Operation Stage. In this stage, the ATDC is expected to be able to establish a market-oriented, integrated agribusiness value chain. Meanwhile, the original 'public-interest functions' are supposed to remain and even to be expanded and diversified. As far as it was designed in the ATDC Guidance, the Chinese companies will continue taking full charge of the Centre's management at the Commercial Operation Stage. Financially, it is hoped that the Chinese government only covers the operational fees of the ATDCs for the first three years of technical cooperation; afterwards, the Centre should try to fund itself through incomes from the commercial operation (Xu and Qin, 2011). The specific roles and responsibilities of the local partners were not specified in the ATDC Guidance and thus need to be further negotiated on the ground on a case-specific basis. (MOC and MOA of the PRC, 2011)

While this stage is in line with the 'business introduction' objective, the purpose of having this prolonged cooperation period and adopting the business model is also, and perhaps more importantly, to ensure the sustainability of the ATDCs. As mentioned in Chapter 2, one of the important reform measures adopted in the 1980s that aimed to improve aid sustainability was to strengthen ‘management cooperation’ in the post-construction phase, which may take different forms such as: 1) sole management by the Chinese side on a entrustment or lease term (given that after transfer the project is part of the host country’s assets), or 2) co-management through joint venture created by both sides (Shi 1989; State Council of the PRC, 2011). Either a Chinese-led or joint venture way of management could be applied to the ATDC project. It could also be, in theory, an independent management by the recipient side as long as they are considered capable of operating the centre on their own. The specific cooperation model, particularly the unspecified responsibilities of the local partners, will be negotiated between the two sides as the Technical Cooperation Stage nears the end. The original plan as seen in the ATDC Guidance (MOC and MOA of the PRC, 2011), however, seems to suggest a Chinese-led management model.

3.2 Case Study: Chinese ATDC in Mozambique

The Chinese ATDC in Mozambique ('Mozambican centre' or 'centre' hereinafter) was launched by the then Chinese president Hu Jintao during his state visit to Mozambique in 2007[59] and became one of the *earliest* ATDCs that were put into practice after the 2006 FOCAC pledges. It was also regarded and promoted as one of the *most successful* cases by the Chinese government in different occasions; for instance, according to an evaluation jointly conducted by Chinese Ministry of Commerce (MOC) and Ministry of Agriculture (MOA) in 2013, the Mozambican centre was ranked the 1st among the 15 Chinese ATDCs in Africa that were under examination (Zhang and Zhang, 2015). Also, considering the fact that Mozambique is one of the *key cooperation partners* with China in the agricultural field in Africa as well as the centre's *close links* with other Chinese agribusiness projects, the Mozambican centre is hence a fairly representative example for one who aims to investigate China's contemporary agricultural cooperation – particularly the 'innovative agro-aid model' of that – with Africa.

Soon after the centre launch in 2007, a delegation was assigned by the Chinese MOA to Mozambique to conduct a feasibility survey on the project. With the assistance of the Ministério de Agricultura (MINAG) and Ministério de Ciência e Tecnologia (MCT) of Mozambique, both sides finally chose a location for the centre in Boane, approx. 23km southeast of Maputo, with an area of 50 hectares. The construction of the centre started in 2009 and finished in 2010. In July 2011, the centre was formally transferred to the Mozambican government and thereby became national assets of the latter. From April 2012, the centre entered into the Technical Cooperation Stage. According to the initial design for the ATDCs, the Mozambican centre should in theory start its Commercial Operation Stage from 2015[60].

The Chinese ATDC in Mozambique, Boane, 18 Oct 2013.

[59] That was thus a very high-level project launch among all the ATDCs in Africa.
[60] The first-time fieldwork on the Mozambican centre was conducted by the author during the period of September–December 2013 in Mozambique, and the second-time during December 2014 and January 2015 in Mozambique. After that I have maintained constant contacts with some of the key informants working in the centre through telephone, messages and meetings (in a third city) from 2015 until June 2017 to keep updated on the developments of the centre.

Lianfeng Overseas Agricultural Development Company ('Lianfeng' hereinafter), a Chinese state-owned farming company[61] affiliated with the Bureau of State Farms and Land Reclamation (BSFLR) under the Hubei provincial government of China, was selected as the implementing agent to take full charge of the centre's construction and the succeeding management activities on the day-to-day basis. On the Mozambican side, MCT was the designated authority in charge of assisting in technical and managerial issues. In addition, the MINAG and the associated IIAM, Instituto de Investigação Agrária de Mozambique, also played an important facilitating role, particularly in the initial phase; for instance, the centre's land was actually provided by the IIAM and they were in reality neighbours to each other[62] (Interview, 14 Nov 2013).

As mentioned in Chapter 3.1, the ATDCs bear two key responsibilities, development-oriented *agro-technology transfer* and commercially oriented *business introduction*. Apart from that, *project sustainability* also stands as an important concern, which has both development and commercial implications. The following section, therefore, will be dedicated to examine how these three functions and concerns have been dealt with in the operation of the ATDC in Mozambique.

3.2.1 Agro-technology Transfer

The main areas of the Mozambican centre for agro-technology transfer concentrated on crop farming (e.g. rice, maize, vegetables) and animal husbandry (e.g. pig farming). These were largely decided according to the local conditions and based on negotiations between the Mozambican and Chinese sides. For instance, rice and maize were chosen because they form the main types of staple foods in Mozambique, though rice is more prevalent in urban areas; and the idea of developing pig farming came from the fact that standardised pig farms were still largely underdeveloped despite a growing demand for pork consumption in the country. Specifically, some of the key agro-technologies targeted include, for instance, rice direct-seeding, mechanical harvesting, chemical weed control, water-saving irrigation, fertilizing, plastic mulching, integrated pest prevention and control, and live pig keeping. (Interviews, 4 Nov 2013-b and 8 Nov 2013)

Vegetable fields and reservoir in the ATDC, Boane, 18 Oct 2013.

[61] For more background information about Chinese state-owned farming companies, see Chapter 4.1.2.
[62] For more details on the mechanisms and politics of the Mozambican government actors surrounding the ATDC issue, see Chichava et al., 2014.

The agro-technology transfer was conducted mostly through ***demonstration and training***. The trainees were selected from the ten provinces across the country by the Mozambican government, specifically through the MCT and MINAG[63], and largely fell into three major categories: farmers, technicians, and officials. Among them, *ordinary smallholder farmers* were given the greatest emphasis because it was believed by the Chinese staff that, by training the actual front-line 'agricultural producers', the technology transfer could achieve the most direct and beneficial effects (for they could learn the agro-techniques and then use them immediately). Around 6-7 training sessions were arranged every year for the small farmers, with each session lasting for 10 days and focusing on one specific agro-technique (e.g. direct rice-seeding or chemical weed control, as listed above). They were taught some very basic and practical farming techniques in order for them to easily put what they learned at the centre into practice at home. The second group was *agricultural technicians*. There were 3 sessions for them per year and each of those lasted for one month. The training courses for technicians were designed at a higher level, covering agro-techniques such as rice breeding and pad management, among others. The centre also offered courses for *agricultural officials*. These courses were at a lower frequency compared to the others, only one 3-to-5-day session per year and revolving mostly around management matters such as introducing the experiences of running state farms in China. At times, the centre also provided study or internship opportunities to *college students* upon requests from the Mozambican side, which may last from several weeks up to 6 months. (Interviews, 18 Oct 2013, 4 Nov 2013-a, and 14 Nov 2013)

The training adopted a combined method of in-class teaching and fieldwork. Due to the fact that none of the Chinese agro-experts at the centre could speak English, Portuguese or any local language, the teaching process had to go through a translator; however, there was only one Chinese-English translator and none Chinese-Portuguese translator before 2016[64]. In practice, in order to counter the language barrier, what happened more often was a sort of 'collaborative teaching' conducted by the Chinese experts together with their Mozambican colleagues. Specifically, the Chinese experts would first explain in English (through the Chinese-English translator) to the Mozambican staff from MCT or IIAM who usually had some agricultural background, and then let the latter take the lead in teaching the trainees in

[63] In terms of selection of the smallholder farmers, the MCT partner said that they would choose (through the local branches of MCT and MINAG) from those who registered with agricultural associations, and there was no specific criteria for the selection expect for an acceptable health situation (Interview, 14 Nov 2013). As will be mentioned later in the training model, the Chinese experts felt that maybe the Mozambican partner should select some relatively educated and experienced farmers, for they found a big knowledge gap when teaching the local farmers, which made the training process rather difficult, though they had later adjusted the course design to address the problem (Interview, 18 Nov 2013). The Chinese experts, however, did not communicate this trainee selection issue with the Mozambican side.

[64] After 2016, the centre finally managed to hire some Chinese-Portuguese translator (first a Mozambican national who used to study in China and later a Chinese national), but according to the centre director, there were still communication problems particularly in daily work, both due to the mistrust between each other (for the former) and the less-qualified level of language (for the latter) (Interviews, 19 Oct 2015 and 23 June 2017). Indeed, even for the Chinese-English translator (a Chinese national) before 2016, the Mozambican partner reflected that they found language a big barrier between the two sides and they could not always understand each other in day-to-day communications (Interview, 14 Nov 2013).

Portuguese or local languages. They also used bilingual (English/Portuguese) handouts and picture illustrations to make the contents easier for the trainees to understand. After that, the Chinese experts would demonstrate the agro-techniques just taught in the outdoor paddy fields and guide the trainees to apply the techniques by themselves. Given the smallholder farmers often had little agro-technology or even education background, the experts sometimes faced difficulties in explaining to the farmers some of the agro-technologies, especially when accompanied by theoretical contents. To counter this problem, the training was re-tailored to the actual abilities of the farmers by the Chinese experts, whereby theoretical contents were greatly reduced and correspondingly the time spent in the fields was much increased. (Interviews, 4 Nov 2013-a and 14 Nov 2013)

The training was mostly funded by the Chinese government during the three-year Technical Cooperation Stage (TCS), while the Mozambican side shared some financial responsibility in covering some of the logistics fees, such as the transportation and accommodation costs of the trainees (Interview, 14 Nov 2013). During the first two years of the TCS, in 2012 and 2013, more than 600 Mozambican smallholder farmers, technicians and officials received training at the centre (Interview, 18 Oct 2013). There, however, was not yet any formal follow-up or feedback mechanism for the training results, mainly due to the lack of financial means (Interview, 14 Nov 2013). However, basic feedback from the farmer trainees showed that they found the techniques that they learned at the centre useful for their production increase (e.g. the technique of plastic mulching). Some of the farmers reported a yield increase by 2-4 times through applying the Chinese technology to their farming practice; furthermore, these trained farmers were also able to play a demonstration role in their local areas (Interviews, 4 Nov 2013-a and 14 Nov 2013).

The Mozambican workers hired by the ATDC to grow rice. They were trained by the Chinese experts first and were now being able to work independently in the rice paddies. Boane, 28 Oct 2013.

Apart from demonstration and training, the Mozambican ATDC also conducted some ***research*** activities, to a much lesser extent though[65], which was concentrated primarily on seed testing. The centre served as one of the experimental stations of the Chinese 'Green Super Rice' initiative[66] that was taking place in a number of Asian and African countries. By 2013, the centre had tested more than 100 different crop varieties, both Chinese and local types (e.g. rice and cotton mostly Chinese; maize and vegetables mostly Mozambican), and reported the results to both governments (Interview, 8 Nov 2013).

Unexpectedly, the seed testing conducted by the centre turned out to become a subject of disagreement and controversy between the two sides. The Mozambican side called for more tests of Mozambican varieties as they would probably be better suited to the local taste and were also more affordable to the local people (Interview, 14 Nov 2013; Chichava and Fingermann, 2015). The Chinese experts, on the other hand, believed that their main responsibility revolved around introducing better, higher-yield Chinese varieties into the host country in order to realize the 'technology transfer' objective; in light of this, the aim of seed testing was to examine whether certain Chinese varieties were suitable to be grown and extended in Mozambique (Interview, 8 Nov 2013). Also, they expressed the difficulty in procuring local varieties given that there were very few seed suppliers on the market. And they did not think that their Mozambican partners had committed adequately to providing the centre with, or at least facilitating its procurement of, the local varieties needed for testing (Interviews, 4 Nov 2013-a and 8 Nov 2013). There was also speculation that links the centre to a greater strategy of the Chinese government trying to distribute Chinese seeds in the global market for commercial benefits (Chichava et al., 2014). Despite the disagreement around the seed testing, there did not seem to be adequate communication between the two sides; while the Mozambican requirement seemed to be somehow ignored, the Chinese did not express their concerns and difficulties to their counterparts either.

Overall, the transfer of Chinese agricultural technology as conducted by the ATDC in Mozambique proved to be beneficial to the local communities. The training courses were designed by the Chinese agro-experts according to the specific needs of the different types of trainees, and tailored to the actual abilities of the latter due to the knowledge gap between the trainers and trainees. Moreover, the participation of the local partners helped overcome the language barrier, and improved the effects of the technology transfer. As well, from the feedback perspective, the farmer trainees, for instance, confirmed that the Chinese agro-techniques were useful and could help increase the outputs, sometimes by 2-4 times, compared to their previous unit output not using Chinese techniques, according to both the Chinese and Mozambican sides (Interviews, 4 Nov 2-13-a; 14 Nov 2013).

[65] To recall the introduction of the main tasks of the ATDCs in 3.1.1, 'research' was designed as one of the key functions of the centres but not treated as important as 'demonstration' and 'training'. This is partly because the capital and human resources that pure agricultural research requires is far beyond what the centres could effectively offer (Interview, 8 Nov 2013). Thus 'research' is usually constrained to a few limited areas that closely links and contributes to the 'demonstration' and 'training' activities of the ATDCs.

[66] The initiative was a joint program by the Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences and the Bill Gates Foundation.

Nevertheless, the impacts of the technology transfer were also to some extent limited, mainly for three reasons. The first problem concerned the design of the ***training model***. As noted before, the majority of the trainees in the Mozambican centre were *smallholder farmers*. This was surely sensible in that by transferring farming techniques to the actual agricultural producers, it would have the most direct results. However, the potential benefits were reduced both in quality and quantity terms as the technology transfer was largely not connected to the host country's agro-technology extension system. Indeed, by training more local *agro-extension officers*, they could better digest the Chinese techniques given their professional backgrounds and thus have a greater impact on disseminating the information to farmers due to the elimination of communication barriers (between the extension officers and local farmers) and the links to their broader extension networks, including follow-up extension and support services. However, as seen in the Mozambican case, where a long-standing national agricultural extension system did exist, the Chinese ATDC did not seem to be linked to it in any meaningful way: no extension officers had been involved in the training (Interview, 14 Nov 2013); and even the 'agro-technicians' who received the training were mostly office staff without a mandate to work in the fields (Interview, 18 Oct 2013). The detachment with the country's extension systems implied that the effects the centre might be only moderate and less durable, despite the fact that hundreds of small farmers were being trained each year. A comparison example that could be provided here is the Chinese ATDC in South Africa[67] where a number of local extension officers and technicians also received the training and turned out to have played a positive role in coordinating the technology transfer between the Chinese and local farmers (Interview, 29 Jan 2015).

Another problem concerned the ***post-training application***. Even if the technology transfer process *per se* could be successful, it may not necessarily change the livelihood of the farmers, unless they have an enabling environment whereby they can put the learned techniques into application. In Mozambique, unfortunately I did not manage to interview the farmer trainees of the ATDC as they were scattered all over the country, but a very useful reference example could be provided here given the very similar scenario: a Chinese agro-firm, Wanbao, who was engaged in agribusiness and transfer of Chinese rice-farming techniques to the locals in the Gaza Province of Mozambique[68]. In that case, despite the specially designed training sessions for the local farmers, the techniques taught by the Chinese experts could not be implemented on a daily basis simply due to a lack of tools and irrigation equipment on the farmers' own lands, thus the training courses had no sustainable effects on the farmers' livelihood (Interview, 18 Nov 2013). Indeed, this problem was not only seen in the Mozambican case. In the ATDC in South Africa, for instance, the heating systems on the six government-backed fish farms, which were fundamental to apply the techniques that were taught at the centre, were left broken for months, causing stunted growth of the fish and thus reduced profits (Interview, 30 Jan 2015-c).

A potential challenge also lied in the ***different farming cultures***. According to the Chinese experts involved in the training activities, it really took time for the African smallholder farmers to learn and get used to the Chinese way of intensive cultivation

[67] The focus of the South African ATDC was on freshwater aquaculture. The author went to visit the centre and conduct some comparative fieldwork in January 2015.
[68] For the full case study of the Wanbao project, see Chapter 4.2.1.

that emanated from, among others, the land constraints in China (Interview, 18 Oct 2013). Similar problem was also observed in the Wanbao agribusiness project where the local trainee farmers showed little interest in learning the very laborious Chinese farming techniques (Chapter 4.2.1). Furthermore, it was even more difficult for the African farmers who were used to an extensive way of farming to *stick to* the much more technically-demanding and time-consuming Chinese techniques *on their own* and especially *for a long time* – the dilapidation of the Chinese-aided farms in Sierra Leone during the 1970-80s after the leaving of the Chinese aid workers provides a vivid illustration to this point (Bräutigam, 2009). Therefore, training only focusing on agro-technology transfer but without full consideration (and corresponding countermeasures, if any) of the farming culture differences, as showed in the case study, may inevitably reduce the potential, especially long-term effects of the technology transfer.

Although the 'research' aspect of the technology transfer was not treated as the main focus of the centre, the problems as emerged from the ‘seed testing’ issue were particularly worth noting, for it represents a dangerous tendency of the ATDC to ***neglect the local suitability***. Despite all the good intension of introducing high-yielding Chinese varieties in order to upscale the outputs, the centre neglected the simple fact that even if the selected Chinese varieties could be successfully grown and extended in the Mozambican rural and even proved to be very productive, they may not be well received in the markets for the local people simply dislike the types of grain. Again, similar case was also observed in the Chinese ATDC in South Africa where freshwater aquaculture, an expertise for the Chinese, was the main promotion area of the centre but freshwater fish enjoyed a rather small share in South African domestic market (Interview, 29 Jan 2015).

3.2.2 Business Introduction

In terms of the ‘business introduction’ dimension of the centre, the ATDC in Mozambique seemed to have quite successfully brought Chinese agribusiness into the host country. Their efforts could be seen from three aspects. First, Lianfeng, the project-implementing company, had started agribusiness based on the centre. Along with performing the centre’s technology transfer functions, Lianfeng also developed *crop and animal production* by using the land of the centre (approx. 50 ha; see Table 3-3) and already distributed the output into the local market. The main products were rice, vegetables (particularly some Chinese varieties) and pork. Much of these products were sold to the Chinese community in Mozambique such as the Chinese supermarkets and Chinese companies based in Maputo (The author’s fieldwork[69]). The products were also popular among Mozambicans due to the lower prices and different varieties (Interviews, 18 Oct 2013, 4 Nov 2013-a, and 23 June 2017). S*eed production*, both Chinese and Mozambican varieties, was also deemed promising and regarded by the Chinese as another possible business option in the future (Interviews, 18 Oct 2013 and 8 Nov 2013). The seed sector of Mozambique, as briefly mentioned earlier, was not well developed and there was inadequate seed supply on the local market. Lianfeng, along with its shareholder Hubei BSFLR, on the other hand, had special expertise in seed production. In addition, the company also was considering

[69] Some of the information was gained through the author’s site visits and general conversations with people on the sites, but not through formal interviews; these are referenced to as ‘the author’s fieldwork’ in the present chapter and also hereinafter.

the possibility of providing paid *agro-technical extension services*, which was already common practice in China, once the three-year technical cooperation was due to end. However, for that to happen, support from the Mozambican government, for example, in the form of giving agro-subsidies to the farmers, was required – as it was envisaged by the Chinese experts that these services would be uneconomical to the majority of the local farmers (Interview, 18 Oct 2013).

People queuing to buy the produce from the ATDC and to sell on the local markets. Boane, 18 Oct 2013.

Table 3-3 Initial Plan of Land Use for the Centre's Future Agribusiness (Unit: Hectare)

Total	Rice	Vegetables	Animal and Aquaculture	Cotton Seed Production
50	25	5	10	10

Source: Interview, 8 Nov 2013.

Second, Lianfeng had expanded its agro-investment in Mozambique. Apart from the business enterprises based on the ATDC, Lianfeng had also participated in a couple of agribusiness projects in other provinces of Mozambique in collaboration with some private agro-companies from Hubei (The author's fieldwork). Third, the Mozambican ATDC had served as a platform to introduce and assist other Chinese agro-companies to invest in agriculture in Mozambique. They had worked closely with several Chinese agro-companies and individuals, providing information and technical support that facilitates their investment. An individual agro-investor from Shandong province of China, for instance, visited the centre regularly to seek technical guidance on his 300-ha rice field near Maputo (Interviews, 29 Dec 2014 and 14 Jan 2015). Wanbao, as mentioned earlier, also gained plenty of assistance from the centre, particularly in its initial period of investment, including the selection of the project site and rice varieties; it has since maintained constant contacts with the centre (Interviews, 4 Nov 2013-b and 23 June 2017). The same happened also to Hefeng, another Hubei company producing rice in the central province of Sofala (23

June 2017). As commented by the manager of a state-owned agricultural enterprise, 'If we find our investment work a bit easier here, this should be attributed to the ATDC' (Interview, 10 Jan 2015).

In short, from what we've seen in the case of Mozambique, the results of the ATDC in terms of business introduction seemed to have been fairly good. Indeed, available data suggested that at least 9 out of the first batch of 14 Chinese-aided ATDCs in Africa, specifically in Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, Sudan, Mozambique, Cameroon, Liberia, Malawi, Benin, have successfully established their independent agribusiness outside the ATDCs. Even for those which haven't formally started with agribusiness –that in South Africa, for instance – the Chinese staff have been collecting information on the local investment environment and keeping their Beijing-based headquarter regularly updated (Interview, 8 Mar 2015), which may help smooth the way for their future investment in South Africa. Considering the difficulties of the first-time entry into a foreign market, the ATDC project did seem to make it easier for the companies to get into, and invest in, the host countries, with the assistance and facilitation from both the home (China) and local (host country) governments. It was also relatively easier for these companies to start separate agribusinesses due to their identity as the implementing agents for a government aid project, for instance, in terms of land lease or tax exemption. Moreover, it seemed that the participation or intervention of the Chinese government agency could make a big difference as to how much an ATDC can exert its influence. The provincial government of Hubei, for example, had definitely played an essential role in magnifying the platform function of the Mozambican ATDC by establishing contacts and forging cooperation between the centre and other companies from Hubei province.

3.2.3 Project Sustainability

The three-year Technical Cooperation Stage for the Mozambican ATDC was due to end in May 2015. Future development plans for the centre, once the technical cooperation phase ends, had yet to be finalized between the two governments by the time the second-time fieldwork was conducted in early 2015. The general feeling from the Chinese side, however, was that the Mozambican counterpart was not capable of operating the centre independently. A very likely scenario seemed to be that the Mozambican ATDC would have an extension of the Technical Cooperation Stage for another three years, as already requested by the Mozambican government, and in that case, Lianfeng would continue to run the centre. (Interviews, 18 Oct 2013, 4 Nov 2013-a and 29 Dec 2014)[70]

First, *financially*, although the centre had been able to earn economic profits on its own terms and had conceived a business expansion plan for the future, the profits that had been gained from the commercial operation were not sufficient to cover the running costs of the centre. Similarly, it was foreseen by the Chinese staff that future profits would not be adequate to run the centre, which was primarily due to the limited resources the centre had – only around 50 hectares of land and a handful of staff (Interviews, 8 Nov 2013 and 29 Dec 2014). From the *managerial* point of view, although the Mozambican side had contributed greatly to the centre's training activities, it had not fully participated in the management process. Although positions

[70] As confirmed by a recent interview, Lianfeng has continued to run the centre after May 2015, but not received funding from the Chinese government. (Interview, 23 June 2017)

were opened and offices were made available to the Mozambican staff, they only engaged on a part-time basis (as they also worked for the MCT). Seemingly they went to the centre only when they had specific problems that needed to be addressed. While the Mozambican partners sometimes complained that they did not know what was happening at the ATDC (Interviews, 4 Nov 2013-a and 14 Nov 2013), the Chinese felt helpless as they surely could not force their Mozambican colleagues to work with them on a daily basis – although to them, working together seemed to be the most effective way to keep the centre's operation transparent to their Mozambican counterparts (Interview, 4 Nov 2013-a).

In fact, in response to the abovementioned 'lack of transparency' complaint, the Chinese negotiated with the Mozambican government several times and finally managed to persuade them to assign at least three staff to the centre. However, due to a number of bureaucratic reasons, there was in effect still no Mozambican staff working at the centre. For instance, the Mozambican staff considered Boane too far out, especially given their government did not pay for the petrol; also, the lack of Internet at the centre was a deterrent (Interview, 4 Nov 2013-a)[71]. The Chinese travelled to the MCT two to three times per week, but mainly to address administrative affairs, such as visa and invitation issuing, rather than management issues (Interviews, 18 Oct 2013 and 4 Nov 2013-a). This lack of participation raised doubts concerning the ability of the Mozambican side to operate the ATDC on its own. To the least, it is seemingly challenging for them to do so.

In short, from what we've seen from above, despite the 'company and commercial operation' countermeasure was introduced on purpose, the long-standing project sustainability problem seemed to be still quite worrying. First of all, as shown in the Mozambican case, although some business attempts were made, the centre was still not able to achieve financial independence simply by selling self-produced agro-products. This was despite the fact that the production costs had been much lowered since the land, water and electricity were provided by the host country, for free, during the Technical Cooperation Stage (Interview, 14 Nov 2013). In fact, most of the ATDCs were facing similar constraints: limited land, capital and human resources, among others. Therefore, it did not seem very likely that the ATDCs would be able to sustain themselves financially through commercial operations, or at best, they may just manage to make the ends meet but with very limited profit margins, particularly given the current production scale[72]. In order to achieve financial independence, an expansion of investment inputs, and thus production scale, is necessary. This can either be based on the centre or a separate business outside the centre. However, two main challenges emerge here.

First, how likely is it that the bolt-on investment will be successful? The question then is translated into another issue: feasibility and profitability of conducting

[71] According to a more recent update, the situation has improved with a few Mozambican colleagues now working at the centre full time; that said, things remain the same in that the two groups of people (Chinese and Mozambican) worked in a rather independent way (e.g. separate offices), without too much interactions or 'collaboration' in the real sense (Interview, 23 June 2017).
[72] This has been confirmed at least by the case of Mozambican ATDC two years after the completion of the Technical Cooperation Stage since 2015; the centre has been just able to cover the day-to-day operation fees while always trying to save costs (e.g. through hiring even fewer working staff). (Interview, 23 June 2017)

agribusiness in Africa. The thorniest problem affecting Chinese agro-investors seems to be the financing of investment, given their usually limited self-owned capital and difficulties to raise money in China (Chapter 4.2.3). No less importantly, it also depends on the motives of the implementing firm – *to what extent* and even *whether* they would like to invest self-owned capital at all into this sort of 'development cooperation' rather than a real 'agribusiness' project; the Mozambican case has so far shown limited signs of Lianfeng being interested in so doing (Interview, 29 Dec 2014)[73]. Even if they are truly interested and could manage to raise the required money, they would meet a range of practical problems in the agro-investment process in Africa, such as land ownership, labour regulation, market channels, government efficiency, and natural disasters, among others. According to the author's interviews with a number of existing and potential Chinese agro-investors in Mozambique, they have expressed without exception that the difficulties in operating in Africa were far beyond their expectations before they came to the continent. None of the existing investors has managed to make any profits to date after years of operation. This may cast some doubts on the prospect of the ATDCs' commercial development in the host countries.

Second, even if the company could make good profits, to what extent would the company financially support the 'public-interest functions' of the centre? Although it was, in essence, the application of the government-firm cooperation, or a quasi-PPP model in development aid, the Chinese government and the companies had not concretely entered into any formal agreement that would regulate each other's rights and obligations. It is unrealistic to expect the company actors to willingly fulfil, by default, the public-interest functions of the ATDCs, especially given the generally low-profit margins. This leaves the situation uncertain as to whether the public-interest functions of the ATDCs would be fully performed in the Commercial Operation Stage, as the designers had envisioned; or, it is also not unlikely that these aid-type functions gradually diminish while the ATDCs transform into a pure commercial project.

In terms of managerial and technical sustainability, while the immediate danger of project failure does seem to be mitigated with the continuing stay of the Chinese team, potential problems are still visible. For instance, the lack of effective participation of the local partner in the daily management of the ATDCs, compounded by the typical Chinese-dominated structure of governance (Jiang et al., 2016), run the risk of leaving the local partner incapable of operating the ATDCs independently if the Chinese team pulls out of the project. Technically, the overwhelmingly farmer-centred training model also makes it less likely for the local agro-technicians to conduct the extension of Chinese farming techniques on their own.

Alternatively, as mentioned before (Chapter 3.1.3), the ATDCs could also be operated through joint venture, or independently by the host government, instead of following the Chinese-led management model. As to the option of the *joint venture*, based on the common practice of this type of 'management cooperation' since the 1990s, it is quite likely that the joint venture would be formed between a Chinese company and the host government, with the latter holding a share as per its ownership

[73] This has been confirmed again two years later – Lianfeng has indeed not injected extra capital into the ATDC; the centre has been kept running only by its limited scale of market-oriented production. (Interview, 23 June 2017)

of land or other assets, whereas the management responsibilities would still largely rely on the Chinese side[74]. In that case, the actual operation, as well as the challenges of the ATDCs for sustaining its development, would be similar to what has been discussed above. Or, *independent management* by the host government is also a possibility, which was confirmed by the case of South African ATDC (Interview, 8 Mar 2015). However, given the general financial constraints of African states, it remains questionable whether the ATDCs would become financially stable without external support. In addition, the lack of technical and managerial capability building for the local counterparts, during the Technical Cooperation Stage, increases the likelihood that the ATDCs will not be sustainable under independent operation.

To sum up, while admitting some of the positive outcomes, the investigation of the ATDCs – mostly through the case of Mozambique but also combining some other cases – has revealed much gap between the expected objectives and the actual results, which is particularly evident in terms of technical transfer and project sustainability. The dimension of business introduction proved to be relatively successful, but it is worth noting that the introduction of Chinese firms is only the first step. As will be demonstrated in the following chapter (Chapter 4), there are a number of practical obstacles that greatly affected the survival and profitability of the Chinese agribusiness projects in Mozambique after being introduced to the country. The 'innovative agro-aid' model of development cooperation as embodied by the ATDC project, therefore, still needs much reflection and improvement before being able to realising the 'mutual-development' goals as designed.

[74] There have been very few cases till now of local private actors participating in an agricultural joint venture with the Chinese side.

Chapter 4 Development Cooperation in Agriculture: The Agribusiness Model

As has been argued in the Introduction and repeatedly demonstrated in the previous chapters, one of the most outstanding features of China's contemporary development cooperation lies in its *flexibility* in terms of the cooperation modalities through the 'development package' model, and more essentially, the *pragmaticism* in terms of the underlying 'mutual development' pursuits. It is because of this sort of mentality and guidelines that Chinese development cooperation can comfortably go beyond (the constraints of) the Northern ODA or its own 'pure aid' as practiced in the earlier years and choose from a much broader range of cooperation forms. In the area of agriculture, more specifically, we've already seen that, while more traditional aid forms such as technical assistance and infrastructure projects remain (Chapter 2.4), Chinese government has also started to try out some more innovative ways in conducting agricultural aid, typically the ATDCs (Chapter 3). The present chapter will continue to investigate another important modality of China's agricultural development cooperation with Africa, that is, the 'agribusiness model'.

By 'agribusiness model', it basically means the incorporation of Chinese agro-firms and their commercial operation models into the development cooperation field in order to enhance the performance of the agricultural sector (e.g. agro-productivity and value-added of agro-products) and the livelihood of the rural population in Africa. The developmental impact of the 'agribusiness model' could be understood at two levels. In a narrower sense, similar to the PPP scheme that has been gaining increasing popularity in the Northern donor community (Chapter 1.2), agribusiness projects are often partially supported by government finance and thus expected to bear more developmental responsibilities, such as creating more jobs, providing free trainings and helping build schools etc.– in other words, efforts are *intentionally* made to create more developmental impacts (i.e. 'additionality') on the local communities where the agribusiness is located. In a broader sense, however, especially in the case of those purely self-financed agro-firms, the developmental impacts are demonstrated more as a *natural spill-over* effect of agribusiness given the very nature of agricultural sector that feed and sustain the largest population in Africa, and especially those extremely poor.

Equally important, linked to the core argument of this thesis, the agribusiness model also fully demonstrates the idea of 'mutual development'. The chapter, therefore, will discuss how China's agricultural cooperation with Africa has been enmeshed with its own agricultural development agenda, namely the 'Agriculture Going Out' strategy, and meanwhile with Chinese agro-firms' attempts of investing abroad.

The chapter is composed of two main sections. Section one (Chapter 4.1) will first provide a brief introduction to the general developments of Chinese agribusiness investment in Africa in the recent decades. It will then introduce the 'agribusiness model' of development cooperation by exploring its motives, actors and modalities. The second section (Chapter 4.2) will further unpack the model by examining four in-depth case studies of Chinese agribusiness projects in Mozambique – one of the most significant partner countries of China's agricultural development cooperation on the continent. A preliminary analysis as to the results, especially problems, of China's 'agribusiness model' – as has been implemented in Mozambique so far – will be provided at the end of the chapter.

4.1 Chinese Agribusiness Investment in Africa

The earliest practice of Chinese agribusiness investment in Africa started in the 1980s in a few West African countries such as Senegal and Guinea-Bissau in the fishery area (CNFC, n.d.). With respect to crop farming, the early investment attempts started in the early 1990s, mostly carried out by Chinese SAEs[75] (Chapter 2.2&2.3). The scale of investment, however, had remained at a very low level both in terms of the total value of the investment and the number of the participating companies. A few private individuals also invested, but at a much lower rate.

Entering the new millennium, while agricultural cooperation has always been prioritized under the FOCAC (Forum on China Africa Cooperation) framework, it is only from the Beijing Summit of FOCAC in 2006 that the Chinese government began to formally encourage Chinese companies to invest in the agricultural sector in Africa. This occurred at a time when the Chinese government was in the process of initiating its overseas agricultural investment policy, or, as termed 'Agriculture Going Out' in alignment with the country's broader 'Going Out' strategy (Table 4-3). In 2010, the Chinese government convened a high-profile agricultural forum and invited official representatives from 18 African countries to Beijing to discuss the possibilities of deepening the bilateral agricultural cooperation. On this occasion, the Chinese government, again, placed special emphasis on the role of corporate actors in the 'new era' of agricultural cooperation and called for joint efforts from both Chinese and African sides to create a favourable environment that could facilitate the investment activities.

By the end of 2011, Chinese agricultural FDI in Africa had amounted to around 400 million USD, not a significant figure in a comparative sense. It represents about 12% of China's overall overseas agricultural FDI in the world and only 2.5% of China's total investment in Africa (Table 4-1 and Figure 4-1). In terms of companies' involvement, one source estimated that around 78 Chinese companies were involved in agro-investment in Africa by May 2012, standing roughly as 13% of the total in the world (Table 4-2).

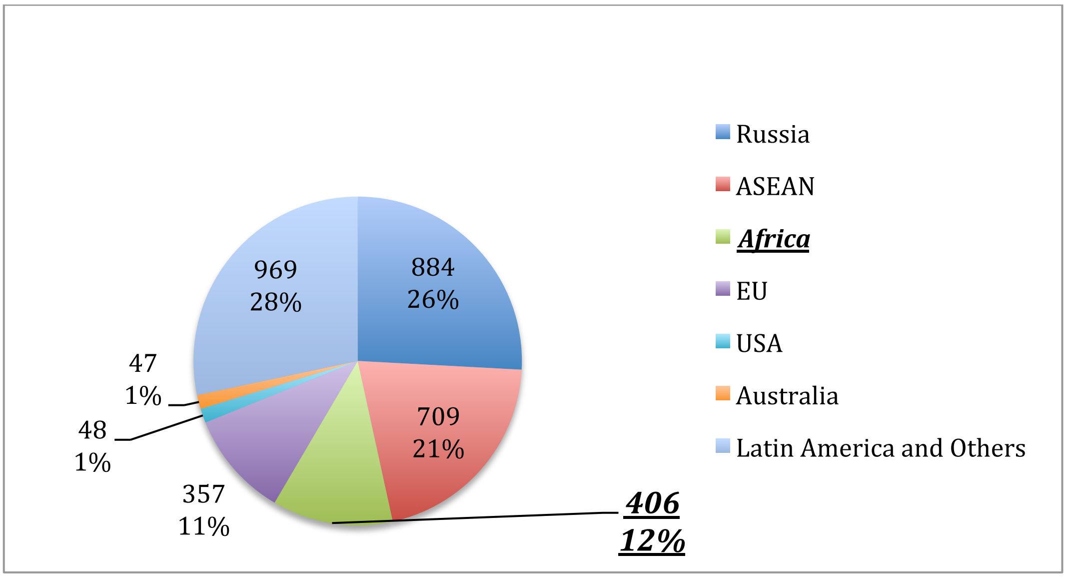
Table 4-1 China's Outward FDI Stock in Africa in Selected Years (Unit: Million USD)

	Agriculture	Total	Share
2009	289	9,330	3.1%
2011	406	16,250	2.5%

Source: The author based on the China-Africa Economic and Trade Relations Reports (MOC of the PRC, 2010 and 2013).

[75] State-owned Agricultural Enterprises, see Chapter 4.1.2.

Figure 4-1 China's Agricultural FDI Stock by Region by 2011 (Unit: Million USD)



Source: The author based on the Statistical Bulletin of China's Outward Foreign Direct Investment 2011 (MOC, 2011) and China-Africa Economic and Trade Relations Reports (MOC of the PRC, 2010 and 2013).

Figure 4-2 Geographical Distribution of Chinese Agro-investment Companies in the World

Continent	Number	Percentage	Main Countries
Asia	354	59.2%	Laos, Indonesia, Korea, Vietnam, Cambodia, Thailand, Myanmar,
Europe	80	13.38%	Russia, France, Germany, UK,
Africa	***78***	***13.03%***	***Zambia, Ethiopia, Tanzania, Mozambique, Mali,***
Australia	34	5.75%	Australia, New Zealand,
North America	30	5.02%	USA, Canada,
South America	20	3.34%	Brazil, Argentina, Venezuela,

Source: The author based on Yang, et al., 2012.

4.1.1 Motives: Mutual-Development Pursuits, Tripartite-Interest Balances

Chinese investment, particularly in financial terms, is very much needed for African agriculture. Despite a great potential of agricultural sector in economic growth and poverty reduction, African agriculture has virtually been stuck in a lengthy stagnation in the years following the continent's independence. While agricultural transformations have achieved great success in Asia and Latin America since the 1960s, Africa still suffers from severe backwardness in terms of agricultural production; the *per capita* output in sub-Saharan Africa fell by around 5% between 1980 and 2001 whilst in developing counties as a whole it increased by about 40% during the same period (EC, 2005). It is reported to have less irrigation, less fertilizer use, less soil and seed research, less mechanization, less rural financing and poorer infrastructure than any other farming region in the world (Thurow, 2008; Harsch, 2004). Capital injection is thus of crucial importance to the improvement of the agricultural production conditions and thus productivity on the continent, which however is hampered by the often limited financial strengths of the African governments.

Agriculture and agribusiness together account for nearly half of the GDP in Africa, and is further projected to be an industry of one trillion USD in sub-Saharan Africa by 2030. In particular, the more market-oriented agribusiness (in contrast to the basic production agriculture) is believed to have an essential role to play in jump-starting economic transformation through the development of agriculture-based industries that creates jobs and incomes. Thus it is suggested that the recently renewed interests and attention from governments and other actors in African agriculture should be extended to the agribusiness (World Bank, 2013). And foreign investments can be useful upstream and downstream of agriculture to overcome the weaknesses of African industries, as well as in infrastructure to complement public funding (NEPAD, 2013). As a result, African governments are all very keen to introduce agro-FDI, including that from China, in order to boost the development of domestic agricultural sector. At the 2010 China-Africa Agriculture Forum, a sub-forum of the FOCAC, for instance, many African leaders expressed their interests in inviting Chinese investment to help with infrastructure, research, experience sharing (Xinhua, 2010).

Meanwhile, as repeatedly brought up through the thesis as a key feature of China's contemporary development cooperation, such investment is expected to fulfil mutual-development objectives of both African countries as development cooperation recipients and China as the provider. In the 'agribusiness model' under discussion, although Chinese government does not explicitly link its self-interested motives to its agricultural development cooperation efforts, these motives are almost self-evident and fairly justifiable within the mutual-benefit framework. Different from the 'innovative agro-aid model' of the ATDC wherein company actors play more an implementing role, they are not only the 'front fighters' but also decision makers as to the business plan, thus leaving much room for their own corporate interests. Therefore, in understanding motives of the Chinese side under the 'agribusiness model', one has to distinguish that of the government and that from the companies' point of view.

In the first place, the 'agribusiness model' of development cooperation, characterised by its agro-FDI element, fits well into China's current internationalization strategy of its domestic agricultural sector. The so-called 'Agriculture Going Out' policy was formally launched by the government in 2006, with a strong mandate to promote and facilitate Chinese agro-companies to 'go out' and conduct agricultural investment abroad (Table 4-3). Despite other important considerations[76], this state-led overseas agricultural strategy is largely resource-oriented (Zhai, 2006; Ye, 2007; Zhang, 2009; Wan, 2011 and 2012). There has been high tension between the increasing demand for the major agricultural products, including both grain crops and cash crops, and the actual capability of the domestic supply. This is primarily attributed to the low people-to-land ratio in China, wherein the arable land area *per capita* is only about 0.08 hectares, less than half of the world average of 0.2 hectares (World Bank, n.d.). Even with great efforts made by the Chinese government, including strengthening farmland protection and increasing unit yield, it still appears rather difficult for China to fulfil the needs for all the major agricultural products solely through domestic production. Filling this gap between demand and supply by utilizing external

[76] For instance, to optimize and upgrade the agro-industrial structure through growing crops of comparative advantages, e.g. labor-intensive vegetables and fruits, and accordingly, developing land-intensive crops in suitable foreign countries.

agricultural resources, either through imports or agricultural FDI, is almost an inevitable course of action for China.

That said, it is however worthwhile to clarify the target crops of China's agricultural imports and FDI, which seems particularly necessary in face of the often emotionally-fuelled debates that frequently assume that 'China is laying an expansive agricultural cooperation framework across Africa, tapping into the continent's immense potential, as a means of securing long-term domestic food security' (Freeman, et al., 2008). In fact, for a series of strategic considerations, the Chinese government has made every effort to try to maintain a high-level self-sufficiency rate (SSR) for some of the key grain crops, especially those for human consumption and thus are considered essential in food security terms (Jiang, 2015; Appendix 1). As a result, the SSRs for rice, wheat and maize have stabilised at around 98–100% both in total and separate terms (Appendixes 2, 3&4). Meanwhile, the Chinese government has also developed an integrated grain reserves system across the country in order to further strengthen the national food security.

Indeed, largely because of this policy priority given to grain crops farming at home, which has consequently occupied up to 80–90% of the country's total arable land, it is made an almost inevitable choice for China to resort to international trade and FDI in order to ensure effective supply of other important types of agricultural products, especially those land-intensive cash crops like soybeans, cotton, and rubber. It is hoped by the Chinese government, for instance, that through agricultural FDI, China could have access to overseas equity holdings of soybeans, cotton, sugar crops, palm oil and rubber amounting to respectively 20%, 40%, 30%, 15% and 20% of their total imports by the year of 2020 (NDRC and MOC of the PRC, 2013). This trend is also widely seen in China's actual practice of overseas agricultural investment, and that in Africa as well (Appendixes 5, 6, 7&8; Box 4-1). Therefore, instead of importing or growing grain crops that are of significant food security implications (FAO, 2003), the main focus of Chinese agricultural imports and FDI is effectively different types of cash crops.

From a corporate point of view, furthermore, there is also an urgent need for many of Chinese agriculture-based companies[77] to start seriously considering their overseas strategies, particularly in face of the mounting costs and unstable supply of agricultural raw materials which, among other things, have continually reduced the companies' profit margin.

To give some examples for this case: in the grain industry, for instance, the Chinese government has set minimum prices for agro-companies to purchase certain types of grains from farmers in order to protect the interests of the latter. These prices are usually much higher than that of those produced in some other countries, e.g. the Southeast Asian neighbours, due to China's increasing land constraints and growing costs of labour and agro-inputs. The rational choice, therefore, would be to buy raw materials from abroad. However, under the government's Grain and Cotton Import Quota System ('Import Quota System' hereinafter), agro-companies are not allowed to conduct imports of rice, wheat, maize and cotton unless they can obtain the quota required, which nevertheless is often awarded in favour of the SAEs (state-owned

[77] For more details about Chinese 'agriculture-based companies', see 4.1.2.

agricultural enterprises). For the majority who cannot obtain the ‘import quota’, they would have to bear the high costs of raw agro-materials, which makes them less profitable and also less competitive compared to their foreign counterparts operating in China. Furthermore, despite the high prices, it is not guaranteed that companies can secure the raw materials they need. The large number of Chinese agro-processing companies, compounded by the massive intrusion of powerful transnational agro-firms after China’s entry into WTO since 2001, has created a rather grim scenario in every harvest season in which numerous agricultural companies – state or private, domestic or foreign – scramble for the relatively limited supply of agro-products from Chinese farmers. For those who are not able to obtain the raw materials, processing lines may have to be shut down.

Another example would be the soybean industry, where the problems experienced are different but equally challenging. Because soybean is not under the Import Quota System, Chinese companies are free to purchase soybeans from foreign traders. However, it is precisely because of the absence of strict protective measures, and consequently the high dependency upon imports – nearly 80% of the soybeans consumed in China in recent years were imported from abroad – that Chinese soybean processing firms became increasingly subject to the price fluctuations on international markets. During the soybean price fluctuation in 2004, for instance, more than half of Chinese medium/small-sized soybean processing firms shut down or went bankrupt, and 70% of those affected Chinese firms were purchased by transnational grain giants, whereby leading to a total of 60% of China’s soybean processing volumes to be purchased and controlled by foreign enterprises (Comnews, 2014).

Against this background, the primary and most direct motives for Chinese agricultural enterprises to ‘go abroad’ is to offset the disadvantageous business conditions at home with a view to maintaining and maximizing their profitability; specifically, they need to secure cheaper and stable sources of agricultural raw materials through conducting agro-FDI. Meanwhile, the government motive for promoting ‘Agriculture Going Out’ is to assure adequate supply of major agricultural products; and it is for that purpose that the government started to encourage Chinese agro-companies to gain access to overseas agricultural resources via investing abroad. Furthermore, on the African side, the underdeveloped agricultural sectors in many African countries are calling for FDI both as a capital catalyst and a growth engine of agriculture and agribusiness industry, with a view to uplifting people from hunger and poverty to the greatest degree possible. There is, therefore, considerable compatibility among the tripartite interests of the Chinese government, Chinese agro-firms and African states; indeed, this potentially ‘win-win-win’ scenario could serve as an indispensible cornerstone for the ‘agribusiness model’ to truly fulfil its envisioned mutual-development pursuits. That said, the too many actors and interests co-existing will inevitably entail the problem of interests balancing and actions coordination, as will be shown in the forthcoming case studies (Chapter 4.2).

Table 4-2 China's 'Agriculture Going Out' Policy

Policy Objectives	• Guarantee the adequate supply of the major agricultural products by utilizing overseas agricultural resources • Explore and expand international markets for China's advantaged agricultural products and technology • Utilize advanced foreign agro-technology • Enhance the international competitiveness of Chinese agricultural enterprises (Song et al., 2012)
Investment Destinations	**Principle: prioritize neighbouring countries, countries rich in agricultural resource, and countries with good investment environment* • Neighbouring countries (Russia, Central/Eastern Europe, Central/Southeast Asia) • Latin America • Africa • The West (Europe, America, Australia, etc.) (NDRC and MOC, 2013; Song et al., 2012)
Investment Fields	**Principle: prioritize cash crops of high import-dependency, and develop grain crops in appropriate regions* • Crop farming o Southeast Asia: palm oil, rubber, rice, maize, o Russia, Central Asia and Central/Eastern Europe: soybean, rape, cotton, wheat, barley, maize, o Latin America: soybean, cotton, sugar products, o Central/Southern/Eastern Africa: cotton, grain crops, o Central/Western Africa: cotton, palm oil, rubber, o South Asia, Australia, North America: soybean, cotton, rape, wheat, sugar products, • Animal husbandry • Fishery (NDRC and MOC, 2013; Song et al., 2012; Ye, 2007)
Investment Value Chain	**Principle: start from and focus mainly on storage and logistics, complementing by production, processing and international trade,* • Production • Processing • Storage • Logistics • Trade (NDRC and MOC, 2013; Wan, 2012)
Investment Modalities	• Greenfield investment: to start a new enterprise (farm and/or progressing factory) in the investment destination country • Equity investment: to participate in the corporate operation by the form of share purchase or M&A (Mergers and Acquisitions) with established agro-enterprises in the investment destination country (Wan, 2012; Zhang, 2009)
Investment Entities	• To support some central enterprises and large-scale agricultural enterprises to become the main force of China's overseas agricultural investment • To encourage non-agricultural, private and medium/small-sized firms to participate in the agricultural foreign investment process (NDRC and MOC, 2013; Wan, 2012)
Supporting Measures	• Policy encouragement and investment guidance • Financial support • Insurance and tax measures • Diplomatic backup (NDRC and MOC, 2013; Ma et al., 2014)

Source: The author based on the documents as indicated above.

4.1.2 Actors: Firm-Government Cooperation

Corporate Actors

In the 'agribusiness model', where foreign investment in local agricultural industry is treated and utilized as a means of development cooperation, the different types of Chinese agriculture-related firms naturally take a leading role. Currently, there are four major types of companies that have been actively engaged with overseas agricultural investment, namely the central SAEs, local SAEs, private agro-companies and some non-agricultural but agriculture-based firms. As observed from the ground (Chapter 2, 3&4.2), these four kinds of companies have all been involved in Chinese agricultural development cooperation with Africa, particularly under the 'agribusiness model'.

Specifically, *central SAEs* refer to those state-owned agricultural enterprises that operate at the central government level, and in most cases, under the direct governing of the State-owned Assets Supervision and Administration Commission of the State Council (SASAC)[78]. Currently, there are around six central SAEs in China, three of which – respectively China National Agricultural Development Group Corporation (CNADC), China National Cereals, Oils and Foodstuffs Corporation (COFCO) and Chinatex Corporation (Chinatex) – have been more active in conducting agro-foreign investment, whereas the others tend to focus more on their domestic business (see Appendixes 5&6). *Local SAEs*, on the other hand, indicate state-owned agricultural enterprises operating at the local, mostly provincial, government level and thus accountable to the local SASAC. Among them, the state-owned farming and reclamation enterprises ('state farming enterprises' hereinafter) as well as the local grain groups have played a pioneering role among the diverse types of local SAEs who are engaged in overseas investment.

Particularly, with specialist expertise in land reclamation and cultivation, the state farming enterprises have long taken an important part in the agricultural cooperation area between China and Africa, which could be dated back to the 1960s (Chapter 2). In the new era, the state farming enterprises of Shanxi (shǎnxī) and Hubei provinces, for instance, are still currently undertaking Chinese government's flagship agro-aid projects of the ATDC, in Cameroon and Mozambique respectively (Chapter 3). Against the background of the country's 'Agriculture Going Out' policy, the state farming enterprises also play a leading role in the process of overseas agricultural exploitation. By the end of 2013, the Chinese state farming enterprises had established 113 agro-investment projects in 42 countries across the Americas, Australia, Europe, Africa and Southeast Asia (Ding, 2014). And the country's state farm system in total owned approximately 266,000 hectares (including 233,000 of grain crops and 20,000 of rubber) of farmland abroad and about one million tons of grain crops were produced overseas, for instance, in 2013 (Yu, 2014; see also Appendix 7).

[78] This is a very important government agency in China. Authorized by the State Council, the SASAC is entrusted with investor's responsibilities on behalf of Chinese people and government, supervising and managing the state-owned assets of the enterprises under the supervision of the Central Government (excluding financial enterprises), thus enhancing the management of the state-owned assets.

Together, the central and local SAEs basically constitute the 'Chinese national team' that, allowing for their self-interested pursuits, assumes the main responsibility of implementing the government's FDI-oriented 'Agriculture Going Out' policy. That said, *private agro-companies* also participate, and indeed may occupy a much larger proportion of the total engaged in agricultural foreign investment, given the limited number of the SAEs in absolute terms (see Appendix 8). One of the major differences between the two lies in the fact that the SAEs are often involved in those relatively more sizable projects due to their company strength, ownership nature as well as the government support, whereas the project size of private agro-firms is usually more moderate. Also, unlike the SAEs whose foreign investments tend to be more strategic, in the sense of keeping strict alignment with the government priorities – for instance, land-intensive cash crops is among one of them – the fields that private agro-companies have set foot in are obviously much more diversified, ranging from major food crops like rice and wheat to relatively random types of cash crops such as coffee, sesame, Chinese medicine, and anything that is considered profitable to them.

Apart from the majority of agro-companies, either state-owned or private as discussed above, a number of companies that are *not directly associated with agro-industry but agriculture-based* have also joined the team of 'Agriculture Going Out', which can be further grouped into three categories. The first group concerns those manufacturing companies that are heavily dependent on agricultural raw materials. The second group of non-agricultural companies are those who were closely linked to Chinese earlier agricultural aid during the 1960-90s – for instance, SINOLIGHT and COMPLANT, who used to implement agro-aid projects in Africa and transformed them later on into commercial operation for the purpose of project sustainability (Chapter 2.3). Lastly, there are also some who are investing or intend to invest in foreign agriculture either as a way to diversify their business or simply due to the promising profitability of certain specific projects, among other motives. They are, therefore, not particularly driven by agriculture-oriented, state or company strategies as most of the others are.

In Africa, more specifically, there were around 185 Chinese companies involved in agribusiness by 2014, encompassing all the different company types mentioned above and investing in a diversity of sub-sectors (Table 4-4). Among them, 101 companies focused their core business on crop farming, equalling to 54.6% of all Chinese agro-firms, while other 41 focused on fishery, 33 on forestry and 11 on animal husbandry. For the purpose of the thesis, this section concentrates only on the 100 or so crop-farming companies: Most of these crop-farming companies were located in East Africa, with Zambia, Tanzania, Mozambique, Zimbabwe and Madagascar hosting the largest number of Chinese companies (Table 4-5). About 25% of these companies were doing cash crop farming, primarily cotton, but also other types like rubber, sugarcane, sisal, palm oil and so on. The majority of the companies were engaged with food crop farming, mostly grains and vegetables. In terms of the enterprise ownership, up to 80% of the projects were by private Chinese companies; state-owned/controlled companies and those mixed with state element represented only a small percentage. Most of the Chinese agro-investment projects in Africa were medium/small-scaled. There were only about 30 relatively sizable projects with at least 1,000 hectares of land or 1 million USD of investment involved (Box 4-1).

As far as these sizable projects are concerned, however, they showed some different features compared to the general trend: almost two thirds of these projects were invested by Chinese state-owned companies (including SAEs as well as joint venture with some state element). And the majority of these sizable projects were concerned with cash crops; there had been very few Chinese companies that were engaged with large-scale food crop farming in Africa.

Table 4-3 Chinese Agro-investment Firms in Africa

Region	**Number of Countries**	**Number of Chinese Agro-firms**				**Chinese Firms of all kinds**	**Share of Agro-firms in all**
		Crop Farming	Animal Husbandry	Forestry	Fishery		
East Africa	17	**73**				1000	1.7%
		53	9	4	7		
West Africa	16	57				761	7.5%
		25	0	11	21		
Central Africa	9	34				388	8.8%
		12	2	17	3		
North Africa	7	17				439	3.9%
		7	0	1	9		
Southern Africa	5	4				294	1.4%
		4	0	0	0		
Total (Share in all agro-firms, %)	54	**185**				**2882**	**6.4%**
		101 (54.6%)	11 (5.9%)	33 (17.8%)	41 (22.2%)		

Source: The author based on the MOC online database, updated by 8 August 2014.

Table 4-4 Top Ten African Countries Hosting Chinese Agro-investment Firms

Rank	**Country**	**Number of Chinese Agro-firms**	**Number of Chinese Companies of All Kinds**	**Share**
1	***Zambia***	23	187	12.3%
2	Gabon	12 (11 in forestry and fishery)	33	36.4%
2	***Mozambique***	12	81	14.8%
3	Ghana	12 (7 in fishery and forestry)	142	8.5%
4	***Tanzania***	12	147	8.2%
5	Mauritania	8 (All in fishery)	21	38.1%
6	Liberia	8 (6 in forestry and fishery)	34	23.5%
7	***Sudan***	8	91	8.8%
8	***Angola***	8	116	6.9%
9	***Madagascar***	7	32	21.9%
10	***Zimbabwe***	7	94	7.4%

Source: The author according to the MOC online database, updated by 8 August 2014.

Central-level SAEs and SOEs:
1. CAAIC – Tanzania (1999) – **Sisal** – 6,900ha – EXIM concession loans
2. CAAIC – Zambia (1994) – Wheat, Maize – 3,600ha
3. CAAIC – Madagascar (2014) – Hybrid rice – CADFund
4. CSFAC – Zambia (1990, 1999) – Grains, Vegetables, Animals – 3,200ha *(in cooperation with Jiangsu SFE)*
5. SINOLIGHT – Mali (1960-70s, 2009) – **Sugarcane** – 30,000ha – EXIM concessional loans
6-9. COMPLANT – Togo, Benin, Sierra Leone, Madagascar – **Sugarcane** – 18,000ha
10. China SDIC International Trade (2012)– Central Africa Republic – **Cotton**

Provincial-level SFEs and SOEs:
11. Jiangsu SFE – Zambia – Grains, Vegetables – 2,300ha *(in cooperation with CSFAC)*
12. Shanxi SFE – Cameroon – Rice, Cassava – 10,000ha – CDB
13. Anhui SFE – Zimbabwe – Wheat, Maize, Soybean, **Tobacco** – 50, 000ha – EXIM concessional loans *(in cooperation with private Tianrui)*
14. Hubei SFE – Mozambique – Rice – 22,000ha (in cooperation with private Wanbao and Hefeng)
15. Hubei SFE – Zimbabwe – **Tobacco**, Vegetables – 3,000ha
16. Hainan Rubber Group – Sierra Leone – **Rubber**, Rice – 135,000ha – EXIM concessional loans
17. Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps – Angola – Maize, Soybean, Rice, Vegetables – 17,000ha
18. Jilin Overseas Agricultural Investment and Development Group – Zambia – 2,000ha

Mixed-ownership Companies with State Element:
18. SDIETC Group (Shandong) – Sudan – **Cotton**, 6,700ha
19. Tianli Group (Shanxi)– Madagascar – **Cotton** – 60,000ha – CDB/CADFund
20. ZTE Energy – DR Congo – Palm oil, Maize, Cassava *[Biofuel]* – 5,300ha
21. COVEC – Nigeria – Rice – 2,000ha

Private Companies:
22. China-Africa Cotton Company (Shandong) – Zambia, Mozambique, Malawi, Zimbabwe – **Cotton** – CDB/CADFund
23. Lianfang (Shandong) – Zambia – **Cotton** – beyond 10,000ha
28. Junde (Shandong) – Zimbabwe – **Cotton**
29. Jinfang (Shandong) – Zimbabwe – **Cotton**
24. Wudi (Hubei) – Zambia – Cassava, Soybean, Maize *[Biofuel]* – 80,000ha
25. Wanbao (Hubei) – Mozambique – Rice – 20,000ha – CDB/CADFund *(in cooperation with Hubei SFE)*
26. Hefeng (Hubei) – Mozambique – Rice (**sugarcane)** – 2,000ha *(in cooperation with Hubei SFE)*
27. Haode (Henan) – Mozambique – 1,000ha
30. Tianrui (Anhui) – Zimbabwe – Maize, Tobacco – 3,000ha *(in cooperation with Anhui SFE)*
31. Tianyuan (Shandong) – Sudan – **Cotton** – 1,300ha
32. Fenghui (Shandong) – Sudan – **Cotton** – 3,000ha
33. Yingma (Hunan) – Madagascar – Hybrid Rice – 7,000ha
34. Yuemei (Zhejiang) – Nigeria, Tanzania, Togo, Sierra Leone, Mali – **Cotton**

Box 4-1 Some of the Sizable Agro-investment Projects by Chinese Companies in Africa

Source: The author based on Chinese media reports, company websites and the author's fieldwork.
Notes: SAE – State-owned Agricultural Enterprise; SOE – State-owned Enterprise; SFE: State Farming Enterprise.

Governmental Actors

Despite the leading role naturally taken by the different types of agriculture-related companies, Chinese government actors also play a part, particularly in terms of mobilizing, supporting and supervising the company actors in a range of ways, in the 'agribusiness model' of development cooperation with Africa. While this is to certain extent similar to the role played by the public sectors under the Western 'development PPP' model, what distinguishes it from the latter is it also serving as policymaker and business facilitator under the 'Agriculture Going Out' agenda.

The Ministry of Agriculture (MOA) and Ministry of Commerce (MOC) at the central government level, along with the Department of Agriculture and Department of Commerce at the provincial government level, take the main responsibilities on behalf of the Chinese government to formulate and implement the country's agricultural foreign investment policy. At the central level, while the MOA, given its specialist expertise, is usually involved in formulating action plans, providing suggestions and coordinating matters that require specific agricultural background, the MOC facilitates the process in a more general commercial sense, such as approving and registering agro-investment projects and firms, providing country-specific investment guides to the investors. The two systems, agricultural and commercial, of both central and provincial governments closely work with each other in promoting and regulating China's agricultural foreign investment on a day-to-day basis.

More specifically, three entities under the MOA play important roles in agro-investment related matters. The Department of International Cooperation acts like the policy-making body, the Foreign Economic Cooperation Centre is largely in charge of policy implementation, and the Research Centre for Rural Economy serves as a think tank that provides reports and drafts policies for the Ministry. On the MOC side, the most relevant entities include the Department of Outward Investment and Economic Cooperation who is the main implementing body of the government's 'Going Out' strategy, regional departments – in the case of Africa, for instance, the Department of West Asian and African Affairs – which are in charge of drafting and implementing regional economic cooperation policies, and very importantly, the Economic and Commercial Counsellor's Offices, the MOC's overseas branches (often located within Chinese embassies) that play an assisting role to help Chinese agro-companies with local issues such as boosting public relations and solving business-related conflicts of the companies.

Apart from these two systems, some other Chinese government agencies also to different degrees participate. The National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC)[79], for instance, played an important part in drafting the *Suggestions on Overseas Agricultural Investment and Cooperation* (*Suggestions* hereinafter, Table 4-5), one of the most important official documents on overseas agro-investment. To achieve a better coordination result, there are also two inter-ministry cooperation mechanisms in place, both of which are led prominently by the MOA and MOC. One is called "Agriculture Going Out" Inter-ministry Coordinating Leading Group, made up of 10 different central ministries and established in 2006; the other is Inter-ministry Working Mechanism on Overseas Agricultural Resources Exploration

[79] NDRC is the key ministry under the State Council that is responsible for monitoring and guiding the national macro-economy and social development.

formed by 14 different ministries and established in 2008 (Table 4-5). These two mechanisms, however, do not seem to have played an active or adequate role in real practice (Jiao, 2013).

In addition, some policy-oriented national banks and insurance companies have worked closely with the government in facilitating Chinese agro-companies to invest abroad. The most relevant ones include the Export and Import Bank of China (EXIM Bank), the China Development Bank (CDB), and the China Export & Credit Insurance Corporation (SINOSURE).

Table 4-5 Policy and Institutional Developments of China's 'Agriculture Going Out' Policy

2006	***Suggestions on Hastening the Implementation of the "Agriculture Going Out" Strategy*** by the Ministry of Commerce (MOC), the Ministry of Agriculture (MOA) and the Ministry of Finance
	Development Plan of the "Agriculture Going Out" Strategy by the MOA
	**Founded the "Agriculture Going Out" Inter-ministry Coordinating Leading Group made up of 10 different central ministries and led by MOA and MOC*
2007	***No. 1 Document*** of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) **-** Hasten the implementation of the "Agriculture Going Out" strategy (focusing more on the agricultural trade aspect).
2008	***Decisions on Several Key Issues of Promoting the Rural Reform*** by the CCP - Expand the "Agricultural Opening Up": combine 'inviting in' and 'going out'; strengthen the capability to utilize the "two markets" and "two resources" both at home and abroad; develop the agricultural international cooperation; foster the development of transnational agricultural firms; gradually build up an international integrated system for agricultural production, processing, storage, logistics and trade.
	Medium/Long-term Plan of China's Grain Security (2008-2020) by the State Council - Strengthen the international cooperation in the grains and oils area; implement the "Agriculture Going Out" strategy; encourage Chinese enterprises to invest abroad; establish stable and reliable guarantee system for grain imports; enhance the capability of ensuring grain security.
	**Set up the Inter-ministry Working Mechanism on Overseas Agricultural Resources Exploration formed by 14 central ministries and led by MOC and MOA*
2010	***No. 1 Document*** *of the CCP* **-** Enhance the level of the "Agricultural Opening Up"; strengthen the international cooperation on agricultural technology and resources; formulate encouraging policies and promote qualified enterprises to invest abroad.
2011	***The 12th Five-year Plan of the Food-processing Industry*** *by the National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC) and the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology (MIIT)* - Develop international grain cooperation, encourage Chinese enterprises to go abroad and establish processing firms for rice, cotton and soybean; encourage qualified enterprises to invest abroad in palm, soybean, sunflower seeds and other oil products, and establish overseas edible oil production and processing bases; build up the guarantee system for diverse types of oil products and editable vegetable oils.
	Development Plan of the Agricultural Investment and Cooperation by the third conference of Inter-ministry Working Mechanism on Overseas Agricultural Resources Exploration
2013	***Suggestions on Overseas Agricultural Investment and Cooperation*** by the NDRC and the MOC (for more, see Table 6-2)
2014	***No. 1 Document*** of the CCP - Utilize the international agricultural product market; hasten the implementation of the "Agriculture Going Out" strategy; foster the development of large-scale, internationally competitive enterprises of grains, cotton, oils; support the agricultural production and export/import cooperation especially with the neighbouring countries; encourage the financial agencies to innovate in financing types and methods for agricultural international trade and "Agriculture Going Out"; explore the feasibility of establishing special fund for international trade and overseas agricultural development.

Source: The author based on the relevant official documents during 2006–2014.

These government and related agencies have made a joint effort, through a diversity of methods from policy encouragement, financial support, tax and insurance measures to diplomatic backup, to mobilize and support Chinese agro-companies' FDI activities. The Chinese government has, since the mid-2000s, issued a series of policy documents and statements that highlight the necessity of conducting overseas agro-investment and encourage Chinese enterprises to take an active role in this process (Table 4-5). These policies, although still relatively rough, do help bolster the confidence of domestic investors and also lay the foundations for relevant agencies to put forward more concrete measures. The abovementioned *Suggestions* made by the NDRC and MOC in 2013 set out for the first time the principles, destinations, fields and methods for the country's foreign agro-investment, which can meanwhile serve as a general guidance for Chinese companies. Notwithstanding these advancements, there is still the need of more detailed, country-specific or industry-specific investment instructions, which could ensure that the companies are well informed beforehand and hence able to make successful investments abroad (Song et al., 2012).

In terms of financial support for agricultural foreign investment, the two national banks mentioned earlier have both established cooperation partnerships with the Ministry of Agriculture. The EXIM Bank, for instance, signed an agreement with the MOA in 2008, promising to offer up to 8 billion USD credit during 2009–2013 to support the agro-investment projects recommended by the MOA (MOA and EXIM Bank of the PRC, 2008). The agreement was then renewed in 2014. The CDB also signed an MOU with the MOA in 2011 on supporting the country's agricultural development, including overseas agro-investment. By the end of 2010, the CDB had provided a total of 420 million USD to finance Chinese foreign agro-investment projects (Zhao and Tao, 2011). There have not been any special financial facilities that are designed specifically for agricultural foreign investment purposes. In early 2014, the leading Communist Party started to encourage the relevant financial agencies to explore the possibility of establishing an Overseas Agricultural Development Fund (CCP, 2014).

Another source of financial support for overseas agro-investors is from state subsidies. There are both direct subsidies and loan discounts under the so-called Special Fund for Foreign Economic and Technological Cooperation (SFFETC), a government preferential package sponsored by the state fiscal system and set up specifically for backing up Chinese enterprises in "Going Out". Agricultural overseas exploration is one of the most supported areas by the SFFETC[80]. To be eligible to apply for the fund as an agricultural project, the minimum investment value of the project should be no less than one million USD (MOF and MOC of the PRC, 2012).

That said, in general, the financial support, either by policy-oriented banks (e.g. bank loans) or state finances (e.g. government subsidies), is limited in type and scale. More importantly, such financial support tends to be biased towards a minority of agro-companies, particularly SAEs or large-sized private firms, due to the closer link to the state strategy and greater significance of their projects. The larger proportion of medium/small-sized private agro-companies, on the other hand, is generally facing

[80] Others also include general foreign investment, foreign engineering project contracting, and foreign labour cooperation.

financial difficulties in the operation of their overseas agribusiness (Song et al., 2012; Jiang, 2014).

Concerning insurance services, due to a number of constraints such as the high risks of foreign investment and the inadequate experience in insuring this kind of investment, there have not been many insurance providers or choices available for Chinese companies engaged in overseas investment. SINOSURE, the policy-oriented insurance company, seemed to be the only agent, so far, with the ability of providing insurance services for Chinese companies' foreign investment including investment in agriculture. In 2014, for instance, SINOSURE offered insurance to over 30 overseas agro-investment projects, with the total value amounting to 1 billion USD (Economic Information, 2015). Yet, SINOSURE insures the investors against a very limited number of risks including only currency exchange ban, war or political turmoil, and requisition or breach of contract by the foreign government (SINOSURE, n.d.). Natural disaster, for example, which stands as one of the biggest risks facing agricultural investors, is not covered.

In terms of tax measures[81], Chinese agro-companies can benefit from general preferential policies, such as the export tax rebate, as all foreign investment-involved companies do. Also, the Chinese Ministry of Agriculture has signed bilateral agreements with a number of countries in order to prevent double taxation upon Chinese agro-companies. However, there have not been many special tax incentives for the agricultural enterprises. Particularly, under the current Grain and Cotton Import Quota System, only a limited number of agro-companies, mostly the SAEs, are able to gain the import quota; the others have to pay high tariff if they want to import their products to China from their overseas bases. This has actually become a big obstacle for many Chinese agro-investors. Notably, there have been a few number of exceptional cases wherein the government granted extra quotas to agro-companies. For instance, Jilin Overseas Agricultural Exploration Group Corporation (JOAEC), a provincial SAE, shipped back around 30,000 tons of rice from its overseas farms in Russia in 2013. The normal tariff standard for this type of rice import is 65% but with the granted quota, JOAEC paid only 1% of the tariff (Observer, 2013). This kind of quota allocation and tax advantage can potentially serve as a very useful economic incentive to Chinese overseas agro-investors, but it is nevertheless only an exceptional occurrence at the present stage.

Finally, the Chinese MOA has established bilateral working mechanisms with more than 50 countries in the world, signed a series of agreements on agricultural international cooperation, and helped launch a number of agricultural investment projects (Yang, 2012). According to the "Suggestions" disclosed in 2013, the government will further strengthen cooperation with the most important agricultural partners in a wide range of areas, such as investment protection, avoidance of double taxation, inspection and quarantine, in order to better protect the overseas interests of Chinese enterprises (NDRC and MOC of the PRC, 2013). However, this sort of diplomatic backup seems to better work in the pre-implementation stage, i.e. establishing business partnership through diplomatic channels, while it is less visible after the projects are settled and put into actual operation (Chapter 4.2).

[81] There are mainly three types of taxes applied in the overseas investment area, namely business income tax, goods and labor tax and import and export tariff.

4.1.3 Modalities: Agribusiness and Its Development Implications

The discussion about modalities of the 'agribusiness model' of Chinese development cooperation in this section mostly revolves around the key aspects of the agro-investment activities in Africa by Chinese investors – from financing, value chain, production models to market allocation – as well as some of their developmental implications.

Financing

Under the 'agribusiness model', financing for the agro-investment projects launched in different African countries largely comes from the Chinese side, which may to certain extent help alleviate the widely experienced financial bottleneck in the agricultural sector in Africa. In most cases, the investments are financed by Chinese companies' *self-owned capital* as well as *state supports* particularly from the two policy-oriented national banks, i.e. the EXIM Bank and CDB (Chapter 4.1.2). Apart from general financial facilities, agro-investment projects in Africa can benefit also from some preferably or exclusively Africa-focused financial facilities such as the Government Medium/Long-term Concessional Loan and Preferential Buyer's Credit of the EXIM Bank (the often-called 'two preferential loans', see e.g. Chapter 2.2&2.3) and the China-Africa Development Fund (CADFund) provided by the CDB (Box 4-2). It is, however, worth noting that, given the 'policy-oriented' nature of the two banks, they tend to offer financial support to the SOEs (State-Owned Enterprises), or in the case of private firms, to those relatively larger-sized companies or projects engaging with agro-products that are of strategic importance to China (Chapter 4.1.1&Box 4-1).

The China-Africa Development Fund (CADFund) was established in 2007 as one of the measures pledged by the Chinese leaders during the 2006 FOCAC to boost China-Africa economic relations. Specifically, it is aimed to support Chinese companies entering African markets and conducting foreign investment. As a sovereign fund, CADFund is provided by China Development Bank and adopts *the PE (private equity) model* in financing the targeted projects, which is *different from the traditional free aid or loan model*. By 2014, CADFund had financed more than 70 projects across 30 African countries, with investment value totaling at approx. 3 billion USD. The cooperation partners have mostly been large-scale Chinese enterprises, both state-owned and private. In terms of project size, the CADFund normally chooses projects that are at least beyond 5 million USD of investment value. The funding scale is expected to reach 5 billion USD in the future.

Box 4-2 The China Africa Development Fund (CADFund)

Source: The author based on CADFund website and media reports.

Value Chain

There are different stages along the agribusiness value chain that could potentially be the targets for foreign investors, from the upstream input supply and seed propagation, to the primary stage of agro-production, until the downstream trading and logistics, processing, and retailing (UNCTAD, 2009). Chinese investors in Africa have so far mostly focused on the *production segment* of the value chain, mostly through 'greenfield' investment, but in some fewer cases also by M&A (mergers and acquisitions). Many Chinese agro-projects do involve some processing activities, but in most cases are limited to preliminary rather than deep processing, which is largely attributed to the high costs involved. There have been very few Chinese companies at the current stage who are investing in other upstream or downstream agribusinesses in Africa.

The idea of investing in agro-production abroad, or overseas plantation, used to be advocated by many from the academia and policy circles in China, especially during the early years after the 'Agriculture Going Out' policy was launched (for example, see Wan, 2011). The argument was straightforward and logical: given China's domestic land constraints, Chinese companies should go abroad, buy or lease land, and establish overseas agricultural production bases in relatively land-abundant countries. There have been some subtle shifts, however, in terms of the agro-investment value chain focus in the recent years, as seen at both policy and practice levels. According to the *Suggestions* released in 2013 (NDRC and MOC of the PRC), Chinese companies now are more encouraged to invest in the downstream activities of foreign agribusiness, such as the storage and logistics, with other segments including production only as complementary. While being in line with the common practice of transnational agro-companies for the consideration of higher economic returns (UNCTAD, 2009), this policy modification might also be related to China's own agro-FDI experience in the past decade – particularly that of the setbacks and accusations triggered by some land deals in Africa and Latin America.

Yet, the new policy rests on the precondition that *the host countries must have a relatively mature domestic agricultural production system*, which is however very much lacking in the context of most African countries. This means that even though this modified policy may be increasingly seen in Chinese overseas agricultural investment practice in the future, it would still be difficult to be applied in African environments. The land-involved, production-based type of agro-investment, therefore, is to some extent an inevitable choice for foreign investors, including the Chinese, who are operating on the continent. Despite the often-controversial land deals for the locals as well as the relatively lower profits for the investors, the upside of this sort of agro-investment is that it could make a direct contribution to the productivity increase of the agricultural sector, and in the case of grain crops, enhancement of food security of the recipient countries.

Production Model

There are mainly three production models currently being adopted by Chinese agro-investors (especially Greenfield-type investors) in Africa, namely farm/plantation production, contract farming and a combination of both[82]. The main differences between the three largely revolve around the usership (ownership or terms of lease) of land and thus different implications to the landowners, especially those more vulnerable smallholder farmers. That said, under all these three production models, a large number of locals are hired to work in these projects and often offered with free training; this may to certain extent help boost employment and thus reduce poverty in the rural areas of the investment recipient countries.

The farm/plantation production model has been the most commonly seen model among Chinese agro-investment projects in Africa. Under this model, Chinese

[82] In less-common cases of agro-investment through M&As, the Chinese may not be directly involved in the production process.

investors need to either buy or lease land from the local governments, or private owners, to build their farms. They can be small farms of only several hectares or big plantations up to tens of thousands of hectares. The length of the lease also varies from 15, 20 years up to 99 years or more, on a country-specific basis. The farms/plantations are usually run by a small Chinese management team and employ local workers to crop on them. The number of local employees range from dozens to hundreds, depending on the size of the project. For instance, the sisal farm developed in Tanzania through CAAIC's investment - one of the Chinese central SAEs - operates on a 99-year lease of 6,900 hectares of land obtained from a local Tanzanian in 1999 (Box 4-1). The farm is run by a small top-level management team of 6 Chinese people along with a larger middle-level management team of 100 local staff working in different areas such as production, administration, accounting, safeguarding, engineering, and medical care. The local staff is hired on a permanent basis - formal labour contracts are signed with the farm. In addition, the farm also employs hundreds of farm workers (700 long-term, 500 temporary in 2013) who are working on a seasonal basis. The output of this sisal farm has amounted to one tenth of the total production in Tanzania, ranking 3rd in terms of asset value (Chen, 2013; Yuan, 2013).

Contract farming normally features in the contract agreement signed between the farmers and the companies. It clearly specifies the obligation of the former to produce agricultural commodities of certain quality and quantity, and the obligation of the latter to off-take the goods and realize the payment as earlier as agreed. The companies also often provide embedded services such as agro-inputs, pre-financing and other non-financial services to the contracted farmers (Will, 2013). Different from the farm/plantation model, contract farming usually depends on the land of the contracted farmers and does not necessarily require the investors to have their own land for production purposes. In the case of Chinese agro-investment in Africa, contract farming has not been widely adopted except for some cotton projects in which the contract form seems to have worked quite effectively. A typical case is the private China-Africa Cotton Company (CACD) which has established affiliates in seven African countries, working with more than 200,000 contracted cotton farmers (Wang, 2014; see also Chapter 4.2.2).

For the combined form of farm production and contract farming, Chinese companies source the agricultural produce both from their own farms and the contracted local farmers. The main efforts are usually put into their own farms over which they have greater control and thus could ensure the basic production output (Interview, 18 Nov 2013). They also work with the neighbouring local farmers mainly for the purpose of expanding production but also in some cases as a way to benefit the local community (Interviews, 18 Nov 2013 and 14 Jan 2015). This combined production model can be seen in the cases of several rice farms run by Chinese private companies in Mozambique, and the sugarcane and rubber plantations run by Chinese SAEs in Madagascar and Sierra Leone (Box 4-1).

Market

As mentioned earlier, the large majority of Chinese crop farming projects are food crop projects focusing on different types of grains and vegetables (Chapter 4.1.2). However, in most cases, they are relatively small-scaled, except for the few bigger ones run by Chinese SOEs (Box 4-1). These food crop projects usually adopt the farm/plantation production model – run by a Chinese management team that employs local workers to crop the farm. Due to their limited scale, they mostly serve the local markets only and thus play a positive role in increasing food supplies of the recipient countries.

In Zambia, for instance, the Chinese farms run by the central SAE, CSFAC, since the 1990s supply all of their outputs to the locals, including the Zambian government, local agro-processing firms and the open markets. One of these farms alone used to occupy 20% of Lusaka's agro-market share (Chen, 2006; Sun, 2007). The farms, in Angola, in which Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps invested, one of China's provincial state farming companies, have become the largest supplier of vegetables for Luanda (Chen et al., 2012). Several rice projects in which Chinese private companies invested in Mozambique have also targeted mainly the local market, through different channels such as own outlets, small convenience stores or big local supermarkets (Interviews, 18 Nov 2013, 29 Dec 2014 and 14 Jan 2015).

Meanwhile, an often-neglected fact is that *the ever-expanding Chinese community* in Africa has also been a key selling audience for these Chinese farms. Chinese people are used to eating rice and Chinese varieties of vegetables, instead of other staple foods typical of Africa such as maize or cassava. Many of these farms, especially small-scaled farms, were actually initiated with the aim of supplying the large number of Chinese engineering and construction companies. Fenghui, a private firm in Sudan, for example, has become the largest food supplier for Chinese companies. Fenghui's chief executive officer used to work for CNPC when the oil giant began its oil exploration in Sudan between the late 1990s and early 2000s, and started his agribusiness in that period (Niu, 2013). Some of these farms are even run by the construction companies themselves. For instance, the rice project by COVEC in Nigeria is an industrial diversification attempt by the company, after its long presence in the host country (Box 4-1). In Mozambique, Chinese agro-firms and some individual farmers supply their products to Chinese supermarkets and have direct and fixed selling channels to a large number of Chinese firms. Examples where this happens are the cities of Maputo and Beira (Interviews, 3 Jan 2015 and 14 Jan 2015).

Some larger food-crop projects do consider the possibility of exporting their products to the neighbouring countries in Africa. Yet, the plan does not seem to be feasible, at least in the short run, due to a series of practical constraints like the companies' limited production, the grain export and import control of the host countries, and the lack of selling channels abroad (Interviews, 18 Nov 2013/10 Jan 2015/14 Jan 2015). There is no solid evidence until now that the Chinese companies have grown food in Africa and have shipped it back to China.

For cash crops, the market channels of Chinese agro-investment have been more diversified. It may target local markets of the recipient countries and thus satisfy their domestic demand-supply gap, or international markets including that in China, thus contribute to the countries' foreign exchange earning. The local market is prioritized if there is demand from the host country. The three sugarcane plantations in which Chinese central SOE, SINOLIGHT, has invested in Mali, for instance, aim primarily to fulfil local needs. With the expected annual output of 140,000 tons of sugar by 2015, these three sugarcane plantations will be able to satisfy the total demand of the Malian domestic market (China.com.cn, 2012). In many African countries where cash crops are mostly export-oriented, agricultural commodities are also sold directly on the international market. The sugar products produced by the central SOE, COMPLANT, supply both African countries, where its four subsidiaries are located, and increasingly EU markets, as well as other transnational sugar traders (People.cn, 2012). In some other cases, the cash crops are shipped back to China. For instance, the sisal farm in Tanzania exports 80% of its production to China (Yu, Y.Y., 2014). China Africa Cotton Company exports around 40,000 tons of raw cotton back to China every year (People's Daily, 2013). Some other larger cotton projects have also expressed their intention to export cotton to China. For instance, the provincial SOE, SDIETC Group, and the central SOE, China SDIC International Trade Company (Box 4-1).

4.2 Case Studies: Chinese Agribusiness Investment Projects in Mozambique

Mozambique is one of the countries in Africa that hosts the largest number of Chinese agro-investors and the most sizable Chinese agribusiness projects (Table 4-4 and Box 4-1). For this reason it has been chosen as the country case study to investigate China's 'agribusiness model' of development cooperation with Africa. Specifically, four Chinese firms – Wanbao, Hefeng, CAAIC and CACD – and their respective investment projects in Mozambique are selected as the cases of the 'agribusiness model' to be examined. These four cases bring to light different types of corporate actors (e.g. private/state-owned/mixed), governmental relations (both with the Chinese and Mozambican), investment fields (e.g. rice/cotton) and modalities (in terms of financing, production and processing). At the same time, they also share certain similarities with each other, and thus provide a good basis for a comparative integrated analysis. Among the four cases, that of Wanbao is treated as the key case given its representativeness and three others as complementary cases.

4.2.1 Wanbao: The Key Case

One of the farms under Wanbao project, Xaixai, 20 Nov 2013.

The agricultural project under discussion – originally called Hubei-Gaza Friendship Farm ('Friendship Farm' hereinafter) – was first set up in 2007 according to a local-government level agreement on agricultural cooperation between the Hubei province of China and the Gaza Province of Mozambique. The link between the two provinces started in 2005 when Yu Zhengsheng, the then provincial Party secretary of Hubei, made his visit to Mozambique on behalf of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP)[83]. In 2006, another senior official from Hubei followed it up and visited Mozambique

[83] Mozambique is among a few African countries with which China also maintains good inter-party relations, which is surely a boost to inter-state relations of the two countries and helps pave the way for wider political and economic cooperation.

again. On this occasion the Gaza province expressed its intent to invite the Chinese to help build a demonstration farm in Gaza with the aim of enhancing local agro-production and food security. To facilitate that, Gaza offered to provide 1,000 hectares of land in Xaixai, a district under Gaza, where the farm could be built. A Memorandum of Understanding on agricultural cooperation was then signed between the two sides. (FAOHB, 2012)

As one of the tangible measures, Lianfeng Overseas Agricultural Development Company ('Lianfeng' hereinafter) was created by the Bureau of State Farms and Land Reclamation (BSFLR) of the Hubei provincial government, and entrusted to operate the prospective agro-project[84] (Zhang, 2008). Soon after President Hu Jintao's state visit to Mozambique in earlier 2007, the Friendship Farm was formally started. The project, especially at its early stage, also had a close link with the Chinese Agriculture Technology Demonstration Centre (ATDC) in Mozambique, a Chinese agricultural aid project that was launched around the same period in the neighbouring province of Maputo (Chapter 3.2). Both projects were assigned to Lianfeng to operate and the Friendship Farm in Xaixai served partly as a test site for the ATDC in Boane. In 2008, Hubei and Gaza formally signed a five-year-long twinning agreement. (Liu, 2011; FAOHB, 2012; Interview, 4 Nov 2013-b).

Wanbao project, Xaixai, 18 Nov 2013.

The Gaza province initially provided 300 hectares of land for a pilot plantation and promised to give another 1,000 hectares at a later stage. Lianfeng tested the farming of rice, wheat, cotton, vegetables and others in the first year and the results proved to be very positive. Thanks to the perfect combination of Mozambican natural conditions and Chinese agricultural technology, the unit output of the rice production averaged above 9 tons/ha, significantly higher than local production standards, which vary between 1-2 tons/ha (Liu, 2011; Interview, 18 Nov 2013; FAO, 2002; Kei Kajisa

[84] 19 farms were chosen from the 53 state-owned farms under the Hubei state farming system to form up the Lianfeng company (Zhang, 2008).

and Ellen Payongayong, 2013). However, due to factors such as insufficient machinery and capital, Lianfeng's speed in expanding rice farming to the full land lot was quite slow, using only 150-80 hectares up to the year 2011/12. In 2011, Lianfeng had to go back to China to seek further support in order to fulfil its promise to the Mozambican government (Ganho, 2013). Shortly after, Wanbao Grains & Oils Co., Ltd ('Wanbao' hereinafter), a private agricultural company from the same province of Hubei, took over the whole project from Lianfeng. Different from Lianfeng, which is a typical state farming enterprise[85] specialized in land reclamation and farming, Wanbao focuses more on downstream agribusiness including purchase, processing, storage, sales and logistics. With annual revenue of around 2 billion RMB in 2011 (approx. 300 million USD) (Wanbao, n.d.), Wanbao can be considered a medium/large-scale agricultural company in China[86], and one of the leading agro-firms in Hubei.

It is worth noting that the China Development Bank (CDB) played an important role in this project-transfer process. The Mozambican working group of the CDB, which is in charge of the Mozambique-related business and based within the bank's Hubei branch, contacted Wanbao's CEO in May 2011, introducing the Friendship Farm project and inviting him for a site visit. In early June, the CEO arrived in Gaza. He was positively impressed by the country's extraordinary natural conditions, regarding that as 'a combination of the climate in Hainan, the black soil in Dongbei, the typography of Hanjiang Plain, and the water resources of the Hanjiang River' (Min and Han, 2012)[87]. Based on this observation, he believed in the project's great potential and immediately signed an agreement with the Hubei BSFLR, taking over the project from Lianfeng. Only one month later, the first batch of machinery and equipment were shipped to Mozambique and the company even managed to catch the planting season in the same year. The process of land reclamation was significantly accelerated after Wanbao took over the project. The 300-ha pilot land was soon fully cultivated and ended up with a fairly good harvest in 2012, with a unit output reaching above 8 tons/ha. (Min and Han, 2012; Interview, 19 Nov 2013-c)

The Gaza government was surprised by Wanbao's speed and performance, and instantly expressed its willingness to provide larger tracts of land for further expanding the project. Wanbao then conceived an ambitious 20,000-ha development plan, and through the provincial governor of Gaza and the then ambassador of China, the proposal was handed directly to the then Mozambican president Guebuza (Min and Han, 2012). Soon after, the proposal was approved and a new contract was signed between Wanbao and Regadio do Baixo Limpopo, EP ('RBL-EP' hereinafter). RBL-EP is a Mozambican state-owned irrigation company that is in charge of the management of the hydraulic infrastructure within the area of the lower Limpopo basin where the Wanbao project is located; the company is directly accountable to the central government of Maputo. It is worth a mention though, that the key local partner of the project, when still under Lianfeng's operation, was the Direcção Provincial de Agricultura (DPA) under the local authority of Gaza (Ganho, 2013). This shift of

[85] For more information about state farming enterprise, see Chapter 4.1.2.
[86] This is by the Chinese standards: as set by the Chinese government, agro-companies with an annual revenue over 200 million RMB are considered 'large-scale', between 0.5-200 million RMB 'medium-scale', and under 0.5 million 'small-scale' (NBS of the PRC, 2011).
[87] Hainan, Dongbei, Hanjiang are different regions in China that have good natural conditions for farming.

local partner, largely driven by domestic politics[88], turned out to have direct impacts on Wanbao and its project, especially in terms of land issues (forthcoming).

According to the new contract, the investment volume totals at 250 million USD (Wanbao and RBL-EP, 2012). The core content of the contract is the land concession offered by RBL-EP in exchange for infrastructure building and agro-technology transfer to be conducted by Wanbao[89]. Due to the nature of 'exchange', the land was provided to Wanbao for free. Not long after, Wanbao began to massively expand the project according to the new contract. However, the company was confronted with a severe setback in early 2013. A heavy flood, the worst in the past 50 years, hit Gaza and all the newly reclaimed farmland - about 3,600 hectares of rice fields that were almost ready-to-harvest, were inundated. The irrigation infrastructure that had been built since 2011 was also entirely destroyed. The direct economic loss was estimated to be 10 million USD (Interview, 19 Nov 2013-c). Despite the shock and financial loss, Wanbao decided to stay and started to rehabilitate the facilities and re-plant rice at once. By the time the fieldwork was conducted, in November 2013, Wanbao had finished the reclamation of 10,000 out of the 20,000 hectares awarded, and in total cultivated 7,000 hectares (Interview, 21 Nov 2013-b). Apart from conducting agribusiness, Wanbao also built two schools for the children and transferred to the local chiefs (Interview, 19 Nov 2013-a; the author's site visits).

Financing

A noteworthy feature of Wanbao's financing model is seen in its close partnership with the CDB. The Hubei branch of the CDB ('CDB Hubei' hereinafter) has long acted as an important financial partner to boost this private firm's agribusiness both at home and abroad. Years before the takeover of the Friendship Farm project in Mozambique, when Wanbao was still a newly transformed, medium/small-sized agricultural company in Hubei, CDB Hubei had already begun to channel finances to support the company's domestic development. During the period 2009-2011, CDB Hubei provided bank loans of 41 million RMB (approx. more than 6 million USD) to Wanbao (People.cn, 2013b). It is also through CDB Hubei, as mentioned earlier, that Wanbao was informed of the investment opportunity in Gaza, and finally sent abroad to start the company's first overseas agribusiness project. In 2012, to help overcome the financial bottleneck confronted by Wanbao in face of the new contract, CDB Hubei granted the company a bank loan of 20 million USD, effectively quenching the thirst of capital, in the initial phase of the project expansion (People.cn, 2013b).

As the project continued, particularly given the sheer size of the land areas (up to 20,000 hectares), the corresponding large amount of capital input still stood as a big challenge to Wanbao. This led it to seek further financial support from CADFund, one

[88] For more about the local politics between central and provincial Mozambican authorities around this issue, see Ganho, 2013.

[89] More specifically, the main responsibility of RBL-EP is to grant Wanbao the concession of 20,000 hectares of land and ensure that the land will not be given or transferred to any third-party. The land lease expires in 50 years. Also, RBL-EP needs to help coordinate the entire process of the project development. In return, Wanbao takes the full responsibility to exploit the 20,000 hectares of land. In addition, the company is required to transfer Chinese farming technology and provide agricultural services to the local agro-producers and assist in the training of RBL in the area of irrigation, production and improvement of the market environment. According to the contract, 10% of the cultivated and irrigated land within the project's perimeter should be allocated back to the local producers for the purpose of technology transfer. (Wanbao and RBL-EP, 2012)

of the CDB's subsidiary investment funds with a specific aim to back Chinese companies' foreign investment in Africa (Chapter 4.1.2). In September 2013, CADFund signed an agreement with Wanbao, at the presence of the Mozambican ministers of agriculture and finance, to co-invest in the company's agro-project in Mozambique (Xiangyang Government, 2013). According to this new agreement, the CDB would provide Wanbao with two types of financial support. With an estimate of 197 million USD for the total investment, the CDB would give the company a *loan* of 79 million USD while the remaining 118 million USD were to be *jointly invested by Wanbao and CADFund* (Xiangyang Government, 2013). CADFund entrusted a third-party accountant firm to make an assessment of the money that Wanbao had already put into the project. CADFund would then rely on such assessment to provide the remainder (Interview, 19 Nov 2013-c). This injection of capital from the CDB significantly smoothed the way for the company's development in Mozambique; indeed, it is not common for Chinese policy-oriented bank, such as CDB, to provide such massive financial support to a private firm like Wanbao – the commitment of Chinese government to agricultural development in Africa as well as Wanbao's relatively larger company scale and its constant good relations with the bank may have played a role in here.

Production and Processing

Being well aware of the fundamental importance of the production aspect within the agribusiness value chain, which is particularly so in Africa given the continent's generally low agro-productivity, Wanbao made great efforts trying to establish an effective production system. There were, however, some practical difficulties for Wanbao itself, as mentioned earlier, is an agro-processing and trading company thereby lacking the expertise in farming. Also, unlike in China where it can largely depend on purchasing agro-products directly from Chinese farmers, in Mozambique the outputs of the local farmers are simply too low to satisfy the needs of Wanbao. To overcome this, Wanbao formed partnerships with a number of Chinese state-owned farms from China's domestic state farming system, namely Junken and Yunlianghu farms from Hubei state farming system[90], and Shuangyashan and Jiangchuan farms from Heilongjiang state farming system. These four farms worked as Wanbao's subcontractors, hired only to take charge of the project's farming tasks. At the time of the author's fieldwork in late 2013, there were around 170 Chinese farmers from the four farms working for the Wanbao project. (Interviews, 19 Nov 2013, 20 Nov 2013-b and 20 Nov 2013-c).

Specifically, Wanbao adopted two types of production models in their practice, namely plantation farming and cooperative farming (similar to contract farming). Plantation farming was applied mostly to the awarded 20,000 hectares of land, which was Wanbao's nucleus farm, considered the core business of the company. On this nucleus farm, apart from the abovementioned Chinese farmers, Wanbao also hired hundreds of local farmers. Indeed, the medium/long-term plan was to gradually decrease the number of Chinese, keeping only a small number of very experienced Chinese farmers and agro-technicians in charge of technical training and support, while making use of more Mozambican farmers[91]. According to the calculation of

[90] These two farms are also among the 19 Hubei farms that constitute the Lianfeng company.
[91] There are several reasons for this. It is first and foremost required by the local regulations. There is a fixed quota for foreigners to be employed. In addition, it is also regarded by the Chinese managers as more costly and 'troublesome' to use Chinese farmers. Most of these Chinese farmers had never been

Wanbao's farm manager, the ratio of Chinese-Mozambican labour in the future would be 1:5, more specifically, about one Chinese farmer/technician working with five local farmers on every 100 hectares of land (Interview, 20 Nov 2013-c). To facilitate this envisioned localized labour usage strategy in the future, and also as required by the RBL-EP for the purpose of agro-technology transfer, Wanbao worked out a two-step action plan.

The first step is called Training Stage**.** The local Mozambican government was fully in charge of the trainee selection process while Wanbao would also suggest some selection criteria[92]. The selected trainees were usually organized in households, each of which would be allocated 1-2 ha of land within the training area of the Wanbao project, which amounts to around 180 hectares clearly demarcated within the 20,000 ha of total land. Wanbao hired an agro-expert from China who was specifically in charge of training local farmers. He taught and demonstrated Chinese rice-growing techniques (such as seed soaking, water management, weeding, fertilization) to the trainees. He was assisted by three Mozambican graduates in agriculture who helped translate between English and local dialects. It is, however, worth noting that, due to the language barrier and different farming cultures (between Chinese and Mozambican), the Chinese agro-technicians sometimes found it difficult, or at least quite slow, to get the Chinese way of rice-farming understood and well applied by local farmers. The training normally took one year; by the time I conducted fieldwork in late 2013, there had been around 100 households involved in this training scheme, 25 in 2012, and 70 in 2013. The training was free of charge[93]. (Interviews, 18 Nov 2013 and 19 Nov 2013-b; the author's site visits)

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abroad in their lives, not to say to places as far and tough as Africa. They tended to feel homesick, easy to get ill (malaria illness and even death), and violated local regulations or cultural rules unknowingly, which thus often caused troubles to the company. They were, therefore, regarded difficult to manage.

[92] Ganho (2013), for instance, casts doubt about the fairness of the trainee selection and suggests implicitly that Wanbao was involved in this unfair selection process. Indeed, as confirmed by a Mozambican scholar (Chichava, 2013) who is well aware of the local situation, there were a lot of politics at play among *local* actors in this process in order to benefit from it. However, to what extent Wanbao was involved in it was not clear. First, Wanbao did not seem to know the local situations very well; for instance, they did not even clearly know the background and role of RBL-EP, their main partner. Second, the criteria they did propose to the Mozambican government was concerned mostly with agro-productivity; for example, they hoped the Mozambican government to choose trainees who have a family rather than being a bachelor so that, out of family responsibility, they would work harder and better. They would also prefer to have smallholders rather than people with other sorts of 'background' because the latter were often only half-hearted towards the training or even not present at all; this may have a direct impact on their performance and, accordingly, the productivity of Wanbao's project. (Interview, 18 Nov 2013)

[93] Ganho (2013), for instance, notes in her research that the farmers had to pay for the training, which was not true according to the author's interviews. She confused it with the fees the farmers were required to pre-pay for agro-materials and equipment in the Demonstration Stage. The training was free as per the 'exchange' clause of the new contract between Wanbao and EP-RBL in 2012.


One of the lands allocated for training under Wanbao project, Xaixai, 21 Nov 2013.

The Chinese farm director (on the left) explained to the translator (in pink) and the three young Mozambican graduates (the three from the right) who were going to assist the Chinese agro-expert in training the local farmers. Xaixai, 21 Nov 2013.

Farmers who had finished all training sessions would then enter into what Wanbao called the Demonstration Stage. At this stage, the land area allocated to each household was increased to 4-5 ha and the farmers needed to work more independently in the field. In order to strengthen their economic responsibility, farmers, in this phase, would be asked to pre-pay 50% of the basic fees, around 23 thousand MZN (approx. 740 USD), for using the seeds, fertilizers as well as the equipment provided by Wanbao. The other half of the fees would be deducted from the final payment Wanbao would make to the farmers for purchasing rice.

Considering the fact that most of the farmers were too poor to afford the pre-payment, Wanbao negotiated and made a deal with a local bank CAPI that the bank would grant loans to the farmers upon the provision of a contract signed between the farmers and Wanbao. Wanbao would be responsible for paying back the money directly to the bank at an agreed time. Two female smallholders, who were among the first batch of farmers receiving the training in 2012 and entering the Demonstration Stage in 2013, reported that they did secure, without much difficulty, bank loans from CAPI by providing them with the contract signed with Wanbao. (Interviews, 18 Nov 2013 and 20 Dec 2013-a)

Apart from the plantation farming on its nucleus of 20,000 hectares, Wanbao also conducted cooperative farming with neighbouring local farmers[94]. There were two major differences between cooperative farming and plantation farming. First, the former is similar to contract farming whereby the farmers farm on their own lands and sell their products to Wanbao on a contract basis, while the latter consists of local farmers being employed to work on the land of Wanbao. Second, the farmers involved in the former are usually 'big' farmers (in relation to those smallholder framers) who owned relatively large lots of lands, while those engaged in the latter are mostly subsistence smallholders. However, by the time fieldwork was conducted, this cooperative model had not developed into larger scale, due to the fact that there were not many such farm owners in the proximity of the Xaixai District where the Wanbao project was located. With the awarding of another 300 ha of land in the neighbouring District of Chókwè, Wanbao planned to massively expand this sort of cooperative farming model. In the long run, the ambition of Wanbao is to expand the area of local cooperative, or contract farming, to 5 times the size of its own 20,000-ha nucleus farm. (Interviews, 18 Nov 2013 and 20 Nov 2013-c)

The storage facilities under construction, Xaixai, 19 Nov 2013.

[94] Having witnessed the performance of Wanbao, many Mozambican farm owners who had long suffered financial loss due to the low agricultural productivity expressed the interest of cooperation with Wanbao, and Wanbao also found it feasible thus started to cooperate with some of them since 2008. Specifically, the cooperative farming model is very much similar with that of the Demonstration Stage: While the farm owners would have to pre-pay 50% of the basic fees for the agro-materials, equipment and services that Wanbao provided, the other half of the fees would be deducted in the end.

In the meanwhile, Wanbao invested a large amount of money in building agro-processing facilities. By late 2013, three facilities for rice processing and another two for maize and flour processing were under construction. In addition, three high-standard grain granaries had already been completed, each of which having storage capability of 8-10,000 tons. (Interview, 19 Nov 2013-a; the author's site visits)

Market and Profit

By the time fieldwork was conducted in late 2013, the rice produced on Wanbao's farms had served Mozambique's domestic market only. There are two main markets: one in Xaixai, the capital town of Gaza province, to which Wanbao's farms sold the rice to the local Mozambicans through their own shops based on the farms; the other in capital city of Maputo, through a couple of Chinese supermarkets which served mostly the Chinese communities but also the Mozambicans.

Local people queuing to buy rice directly from one of Wanbao's farms, Xaixai, 30 Mar 2013, by one of the accountants sent to Wanbao by CADFund.

Wanbao rice sold in the Chinese supermarkets, Maputo, January 2015.

Apart from that, Wanbao also held an optimistic view as to the huge market potential existing in the neighbouring countries. As told by the farm manager:

> Zambia, Zimbabwe, Malawi and South Africa – these are not typical rice-producing countries, but they do consume rice; the neighbouring market therefore is large. We have no plan for now to ship our produced rice back to China due to the simple fact that even if there were ten more Wanbaos growing rice here, they would still not be able to satisfy local demands from Mozambique and its neighbours. Many Indian, Pakistani and also Chinese grain merchants have come to us and tried to be our sale agent, which clearly shows that they do see the market advantages. But we wouldn't do that, we'd like to do the selling ourselves of course. (Interview, 20 Nov 2013-c)

Therefore, while it is usually assumed that the rice produced in Africa would be shipped back to China, in the case of Wanbao, for instance, that plan did not seem feasible, or at least it had not been put on the agenda for the near future[95]. In the long run, however, it is possible, and it could be highly profitable, to sell the rice produced in Mozambique back to China. Indeed, there had already been some Chinese grain merchants expressing their interest to become sale agents of Wanbao's Mozambican rice in China. As reported by one of the informants:

> If the rice could be shipped back to China in the future, the return could be really high. The most valuable part of the rice produced here is that it is pollution-free. The quality of water in Limpopo is seven times higher than the top-quality water in China, and here we see no industrial pollution to water or soil at all. Given the acceptable shipping costs, the Mozambique-produced rice would be able to occupy a large share of the market in China, especially if we target better-off cities like Beijing, Shanghai and Guangzhou. (Interview, 20 Nov 2013-b)

In terms of profits, according to the calculations made by the Wanbao management, they would be able to earn around 2 RMB (approx. 0.32 USD) by selling one kilo of processed rice at local markets in Mozambique, which was almost 100 times higher than the profit that they could make on the Chinese domestic market. As the company set the annual rice production goal at 150 thousand tons and the processing goal at 100 thousand, the project would bring Wanbao about 200 million RMB (32 million USD) of return each year. Taking the 1.2 billion USD of original capital inputs into account, it means that within 6 to 7 years, Wanbao would be able to recover all of its investment costs. (Interviews, 19 Nov 2013-c and 20 Nov 2013-b)

Land Issue

The large amount of land involved in the project put Wanbao into a difficult unforeseen situation. As mentioned earlier, Wanbao was granted land concessions of 20,000 hectares in 2012 by the RBL-EP. The company then started to massively reclaim the awarded land since June 2013. This, however, immediately triggered huge controversy within the local community. It is worth noting that the vast majority of the 20,000 ha of lands, before Wanbao took over, were not really used for farming purposes. Rather, they had been largely left idle, for decades, mostly due to the dilapidation of the irrigation infrastructure as well as the mass exodus of the rural

[95] Professor Bräutigam has come to the same conclusion based on her and her team's fieldwork in different African countries (Bräutigam, 2016)

population since the country's civil war in the 1980s (Ganho, 2013; Interview, 20 Nov 2013-c).

Yet, a number of local people were indeed affected by the project in different ways. The most prominent problem was that many smallholders –the exact figure varies significantly from one source to another[96] – who had used to live and farm on areas scattered within the project site were now deprived of these lands as a consequence of the massive reclamation work by Wanbao. Also, due to the disruption caused by the project, some cattle herders had to change their usual routes, or travel much farther, to access suitable lands to graze their animals. Some cemeteries located within the 20,000 ha were either despoiled, or had to be moved elsewhere, in order to make way for the project development. (Interview, 21 Nov 2013-a; Ottaviani et al., 2013)

The main complaints concerned the fact that these changes mostly occurred without proper pre-consultation with the local people. The latter were thus largely left ignorant about the situation, only to find their own farmland was suddenly being run over by Chinese tractors and bulldozers. Many of these affected people were not happy with the relocation or compensation arrangement implemented by Wanbao. Great resentments aroused, and at least two large protests took place during 2013-14, organized by local NGOs (Justiça Ambiental, 2013; Ottaviani et al., 2013; MMO Notícias, 2014).

Wanbao had not anticipated such situations. As put by one of the management,

> When we first came to Gaza with all the capital and equipment, they [the local government] thought we were serious investors and thus provided so readily the land we needed. They just laid out the map, demarcated areas for the project, without informing us of any possible scenarios like the ones we then experienced. (Interview, 19 Nov 2013-c)

Wanbao's most natural response, in face of the confrontation, was to seek help from the local Mozambican government. They tried to persuade the affected people to talk directly to their government rather than protesting against Wanbao; for Wanbao believed that it acted entirely with the local authorities' approval by strictly following the contract signed between Wanbao and the RBL-EP, and that the responsibility had to rest with the Mozambican government in terms of addressing issues such as people relocation and cemetery moving. The company also went to talk with the local government many times in order to seek a solution for the problems. The negotiation, however, to their disappointment, did not turn out to be very fruitful.

> When the project really started and all the problems suddenly came up, it was so difficult trying to get some real help from the local government. We hoped that the government could be able to play an intermediary role between Wanbao and the local people, explaining the situation to them and coordinating the relations between us. But they don't really do that. They basically just leave all the problems to Wanbao to solve: for the relocation compensation, they don't want to spend one penny; for the cemetery moving, they asked us to negotiate with the local chiefs ourselves, despite the language barrier. The reason they provided to us for their passivity is that they have to take care of the

[96] As to the number of the population affected by the Wanbao project, the author interviewed people from RBL-EP, Wanbao, DPA and FONGA; they provided significantly different figures about that, varying from hundreds to tens of thousands of people (Interviews, 21 Nov 2013-a, 21 Nov 2013-b, 22 Nov 2013, and 20 Dec 2013).

interests of their people and do not want to get themselves into trouble. But do they really care about their people's interests? I really doubt. (Interview, 19 Nov 2013-c)

In-depth interviews also revealed that the Wanbao management had actually worked out very concrete action plans, but the problem was, as they repeatedly emphasized in the interviews, they did not know who exactly – for instance, the RBL-EP, DPA, or the provincial government – they could talk with about their plan. Even if they managed to introduce their plans, they were really doubtful about the executive capability of the local government.

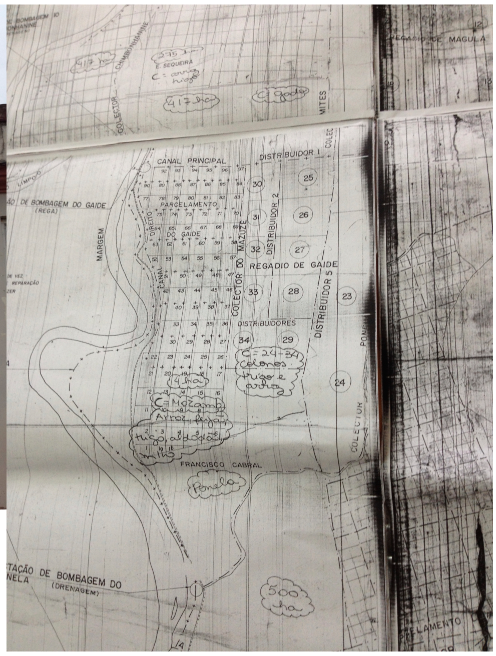
We have set aside a sum of money to build at least 500 houses for the displaced people. We know that they do not only need a place to live but also land to farm. So our suggestions would be to exchange land with them. More specifically, we can build houses along our farms within the project site. The displaced people would then move and live in these houses where they can have access to all the facilities of our farms like water, electricity, and proper roads that would not be available for them in their previous homes. During the day, they can simply work on our farms as our contracted farmers, taking advantage of the well-built irrigation systems. They could sell the products to Wanbao and we will pay them. They must understand that we don't care about the land. What we really care are the final products. So it doesn't make any difference for us to exchange the land with the farmers and it could well solve the problems… And for the cattle farmers, we really don't see that the locals are doing the pasture in an efficient way. They are doing it in a very extensive way that is actually a waste of grass. What we would suggest is to call upon all sides – we can invite the experts of the Bureau of Animal Husbandry from China – and discuss the arrangement plan together. For instance, we can demarcate specific and suitable areas nearby for the cattle herders to graze their animals. It is just a matter of planning. (Interview, 20 Nov 2013-c)

One of the 20 houses (among the 500 planned) Wanhao already built for the Mozambican workers working on the their farm (exterior). Xaixai, 19 Nov 2013.

One of the 20 houses Wanhao already built for the Mozambican workers working on the their farm (interior). Xaixai, 19 Nov 2013.

The local government actors themselves, particularly the RBL-EP and DAP Gaza, both believed that they had done their parts (Interviews, 22 Nov 2013-c and 20 Dec 2013-b). Interestingly, FONGA, one of the most active local NGOs that engaged with this issue and helped organize the smallholders' protests against Wanbao, told the author that they did not really mean to target Wanbao, but rather their own government. What they tried to achieve through organizing the protests was largely to pressure and push the government to act – there was a constant tension between FONGA and the Mozambican government. FONGA, for instance, even expressed their interest to talk and co-operate with Wanbao in order to work out some plans to solve the problems. Wanbao, however, did not particularly welcome the idea[97] (Interviews, 21 Nov 2013-a and 21 Nov 2013-b).

[97] This is actually also an interesting point, for Wanbao, and indeed including many other Chinese companies operating in Africa, normally feel hesitant to cooperate or engage too closely with local NGOs; instead, they tend to work more closely with the local governments. Many observers tend to criticize the Chinese companies for this and accuse them of nurturing corruption, which is in some cases true and fair, but not always. Many Chinese companies do not bribe local governments or officials but still tend to work closely and always in line with the local governments while keeping themselves at a safe distance from those civil society actors such as NGOs. A less mentioned point concerning this phenomenon is that these companies, to some extent, have got used to this sort of



FONGA and the map of the land affected by Wanbao (provided by FONGA), Xaixai, 21 Nov 2013.

behavioral pattern that is very much shaped by the domestic environment in China. It is more effective, given the power of the Chinese government, and also much safer.

4.2.2 Hefeng, CAAIC and CACD: The Complementary Cases

1. Hefeng Oil & Grain Co. Ltd. (Hefeng)

The base of Hefeng Company, Buzi, 15 Jan 2015.

Hefeng Oil & Grains Co., Ltd. ('Hefeng' hereinafter) is another private agribusiness firm that also came from the province of Hubei. With reported annual revenue of about 3 billion RMB in 2013, Hefeng was one of the (medium/)large-scale agro-companies in China (Hefeng, 2014). Its project in Mozambique was located in the Buzi district of the central province of Sofala. Through the local government, Hefeng was provided with 4,000 hectares of land, of which 3,000 was uncultivated virgin land that required a large amount of investment and time to be put into production. For a cheaper and quicker project kick-off, the company decided to start with the 1,000 hectares that had used to be irrigated by the Portuguese during the colonial period. In spite of this, it still took an entire year - since the project started in late 2012 - for Hefeng to reclaim the land and rehabilitate the irrigation system. They began with rice plantation on the reclaimed land in 2014 and cultivated a total of 300 hectares that year. The plan was to achieve full usage of 1,000 hectares by the end of 2015. (Interview, 14 Jan 2015)

Similar to the case of Wanbao, Hefeng was also introduced into Mozambique through the Hubei provincial government, specifically the BSFLR. Partially to avoid competition with Wanbao but also following the recommendation by some Mozambican officials, Hefeng finally chose to settle in Sofala. Initially, Hefeng's CEO was attracted by a potential investment opportunity in the sugarcane business, mostly for its high profitability. But the local government expressed its preference to set up a rice project due to the food-shortage situation in the local area. Hefeng agreed. The idea was that they could start with a rice project first, which, according to the company staff, was treated as a semi-aid undertaking for its very limited profit margin, and launch the sugarcane business at a later stage (Interview, 14 Jan 2015). Indeed, the real focus of the investment plan is definitely on the latter: in total, the company had intended to lease 50,000 hectares in three northern provinces along the Zambezi River and develop sugarcane production and processing during 2014–16 (Ning, 2012). However, the plan was apparently postponed since nothing had been finalized by the time of the interview in early 2015 (Interview, 14 Jan 2015).

Hefeng had also negotiated with the provincial government of Maputo and signed an initial land lease agreement for an 8,000-hectare cotton project in the Marracuene district in 2012-13 (Ning, 2012). This project had not been initiated either at the time of research in early 2015 (Interview, 14 Jan 2015). It is worth noting that, according to the Hubei BSFLR, all the projects mentioned above, i.e. the operating rice project and the prospective sugarcane and cotton projects, are under the name of Lianhe, a joint venture by Lianfeng[98] and Hefeng, although in effect, Lianfeng had not seemed to play a very noticeable role and Hefeng had operated quite independently.

The canteen used by the Chinese and Mozambican workers (left: exterior; right: interior), Buzi, 15 Jan 2015.

Financing

For the 1000-ha rice project in Buzi, Hefeng had invested more than 20 million RMB (approx. 3 million USD) by early 2015, which was entirely financed by the company's *self-owned capital* (Interview, 14 Jan 2015). The total investment value, including the cotton project in the Maputo province and sugarcane project in Sofala, was estimated at 1 billion RMB (approx. 152 million USD)(Ning, 2012), but a specific financing model for that had yet to be finalized. Considering the company's scale and profitability, it doesn't seem very likely that Hefeng could be able to finance the whole project entirely by itself.

Production and Processing

The production model adopted by Hefeng is also a combination of plantation and contract farming. However, at the time fieldwork was conducted, the bulk of the output had come from the 1000-ha self-owned nucleus farm. Similar to the sub-contracting scheme used by Wanbao, though much smaller in size, Hefeng divided the 1,000 hectares into 20 lots of land and contracted them to 20 experienced Chinese

[98] For more information about Lianfeng, see 4.2.1.

farmers hired from Hubei. Each of the farmers is in charge of 50 hectares and required to employ at least 10 local workers to work with them in order to fulfil the production obligation. In total, at the time fieldwork was conducted, there were more than 200 Mozambican locals employed to work on Hefeng's farm, with a monthly income of around 3000 MZN (approx. 75 USD) - slightly higher than the stipulated minimum wage standard in the agricultural sector in Mozambique. The company prepaid the Chinese farmers for the seeds, fertilizers, equipment, and the salaries of the local workers. These costs would be deducted from the payment the company made for purchasing the final produce from the Chinese farmers. The unit output of Hefeng's nucleus farm amounted to 5-6 ton/ha during 2014-15, whereas the local unit output averaged only about 800kg/ha. (Interview, 14 Jan 2015)

Land under Hefeng project, Buzi, 15 Jan 2013.

Moreover, Hefeng also conducted contract farming in its neighbouring areas, providing agro-inputs and services to, and purchasing the rice from, the contracted local farmers. This, however, was still at a very limited scale, not making any significant contribution to the company's entire output. The company would also have to differentiate the rice bought from local farmers - of lower quality - from that produced on its own farm, and sell them separately at lower prices. The limited availability of human resources made it difficult for Hefeng to provide guidance and conduct extensive training in local farmers' paddies to assure the rice standard would be the same as that in the nucleus farm. Many smallholder farmers nearby started or converted to grow rice with the view to selling the produce to the Chinese company and earning incomes. The purchasing price in 2014, for instance, was about 30,000 MZN/ha (approx. 750 USD/ha). (Interview, 14 Jan 2015)

The simple processing facilities in the Hefeng base, Buzi, 15 Jan 2015.

Hefeng had a small set of semi-automatic rice processing facilities in its production base at Buzi, with a processing capability of about 30 tons/day. These facilities were then adequate to process the rice produced on the nucleus farm and that purchased from local farmers. However, the facilities would surely need to be expanded in order to match the production potential. All the farming and processing equipment as well as agro-materials such as seeds, fertilizers, were imported from China, which could enjoy tariff preference in Mozambique due to the country's agro-FDI promotion policies. (Interview, 14 Jan 2015)

Market and Profit

The AAA rice produced by Hefeng, Buzi, 15 Jan 2015.

By the time fieldwork was conducted in early 2015, the processed rice had all been sold in the domestic Mozambican market, mainly in several central and northern provinces including Sofala, Manica, Tete, Nampula and Inhambane. It was quite challenging though for Hefeng, as a newcomer, to break into the local market. Unlike the case of Wanbao, a series of practical factors such as the less demand of the Buzi town, the isolation of the production base and the poor conditions of roads leading to other big cities, as well as the weaker financial capability of the company itself, made direct selling an unaffordable option to Hefeng. Instead, Hefeng had been heavily dependent on local, mostly Indian/Pakistani-run, sales distributers. In the beginning, local agencies were not sure about the quality and market response of Hefeng's rice and thus felt hesitant to buy them. Hefeng had to agree to leave its rice in the stores for free, without taking any deposit, as a trial sale until the rice was sold. Hefeng's rice could neither be sold to big chain supermarkets, like Shoprite, due to the lack of smaller-sized package bags[99] and its own barcodes. (Interview, 14 Jan 2015)

The only positive aspect for Hefeng to sell its rice through traditional sales agencies (rather than supermarkets) was that it may have more competitive advantages. Targeting mostly middle/lower-class consumers, the Indian/Pakistani-run stores were dominated by cheap but relatively poor-quality, often long-stocked, rice imported from South and Southeast Asia. Comparatively, Hefeng's rice was newly produced and sold at very reasonable prices – around 24 MZN/kilo, which is among the lowest price range on the local market. Unsurprisingly, Hefeng's rice received quite positive feedback from local consumers, and after several months' trial sales, the agencies started to order rice from Hefeng's farm. This could be seen as a successful attempt in breaking into the local market, but the low price casts doubt on its profitability. Indeed, Hefeng hadn't managed to make any profit from the rice selling at the time fieldwork for the thesis was conducted. It was expected to take at least 4-5 years before the company could possibly be able to recoup its initial investment. (Interview, 14 Jan 2015)

[99] At least in Sofala where Hefeng was based, there were not factories producing that sized package bags.

2. China Africa Agricultural Investment Co. Ltd. (CAAIC)

A joint venture by CNADC and CADFund[100], China Africa Agricultural Investment Co., Ltd. ('CAAIC' hereinafter) was established under the FOCAC framework in 2010 and focuses on agribusiness specifically on the African continent (Chapter 5.2.1). The company had been in touch, since 2009, with the local government of Gaza province for a potential agribusiness project, which eventually led to a general agreement in early 2015 (not yet finalized) on a 6,000-ha rice production/processing project in Chókwè district. The land will be provided free of charge, on the condition that CAAIC conducts technology transfer on the same amount of 6,000-ha of land in its neighbouring areas. (Interview, 10 Jan 2015)

The reason for this long negotiation mainly lies with the Chinese side. The strict internal inspection procedure within the state-owned enterprise was identified as an important factor for the delay. Also, CAAIC was very cautious about all the clauses in the contract. For instance, whether the local partner would be able to fulfil the promise and provide the amount of land, which might be linked to the land controversy around the Wanbao project in Xaixai that is very close to Chókwè (Interview, 10 Jan 2015). The local partner, on the other hand, appeared to be eager to see the deal finalized. There was also competition between different local governments of Xaixai and Chókwè, both trying to attract the Chinese investor into their own region (Interview, 7 Jan 2014).

The project was estimated to cost around 500 million RMB (approx. 80 million USD), of which a larger part, around 180 million RMB, would be destined to building infrastructure such as irrigation systems. Self-owned capital, here mainly indicating that from the CNADC, is a main source of the finances, making up about one third of the total investment. CADFund, as a major shareholder of CAAIC, will also provide a certain amount of money to the project. In addition, CAAIC may also try to gain support from SDIC (State Development & Investment Co.), a Chinese state-owned investment corporation that was established in the 1990s with a stated purpose to bolster a few key areas of the country[101], and thus could be fairly regarded as an entity of state wealth funds. CAAIC doesn't intend to borrow money from banks in order to avoid the pressure of debts as much as possible. (Interview, 10 Jan 2015)

CAAIC has planed to adopt a combination model of plantation and contract farming. On their 6,000-ha nucleus farm, the company will employ both Chinese and local farm workers. Similar to Wanbao, the plan was to first use Chinese people, for their familiarity to the Chinese way of rice farming, and through training, gradually increase local labour usage. Outside the nucleus farm, CAAIC was required to demonstrate rice farming techniques to locals on the same amount of 6,000 hectares' land surrounding CAAIC's farm with a view to help boost the local production. Apart from agro-extension, the company will also conduct contract farming with the neighbouring areas, providing agro-inputs to farm workers - mostly imported from China due to the lower costs - and purchase the final produce from local farmers at a previously agreed price. Processing was also deemed essential given the low profit

[100] CNADC is one of the six Chinese central-level SAEs (see Chapter 4.1.2).

[101] The four key areas that SDIC has traditionally focused on are respectively infrastructure industry, burgeoning industries of strategic importance, financial service and other services, and international business.

margin of production *per se*, but CAAIC may likely not build its own processing lines. Instead, the company was considering the possibility of utilizing two existing rice-processing factories nearby: one donated, years before, by the Chinese government, the other established by a British company. Both of them had been largely standing idle since being built due to the lack of agricultural output in the local area. (Interview, 10 Jan 2015)

Concerning its future business plan, CAAIC has mainly aimed at Mozambique's domestic and neighbouring markets. Different from Wanbao, CAAIC found it almost impossible to avoid using local sales agencies, particularly in the initial stage, given the fact that as a newcomer it does not have any of its own established selling channels in Mozambique. Although having yet to work out a specific marketing strategy, CAAIC is well aware of the potential fierce competition, especially with the Indian and Pakistani traders who massively import cheap rice from South and Southeast Asia. 'We'll probably be forced to lower our prices in order to compete with that imported rice, which accordingly would mean reduction of our profits' (Interview, 10 Jan 2015). They also pointed out the lack of qualified Chinese staff in the company who can work effectively in the marketing area. Similar to the views of Wanbao, CAAIC also admitted the significantly greater profit margin for doing rice agribusiness in Mozambique than in China – as long as they could successfully fit into the local market. But even in that case, it was expected to take at least 14 years for the company to recoup its initial investment. (Interview, 10 Jan 2015)

3. *China-Africa Cotton Development Ltd. (CACD)*[102]

China-Africa Cotton Development Co., Ltd. ('CACD' hereinafter) was established in 2008 as a joint venture by Ruichang, a private cotton company from Shandong province of China who had entered the Zambian market in 2000, *Huifu*, a private textile company also from Shandong, and the CDB-owned CADFund, which acts as the main stakeholder of the CACD. By 2014, CACD had established subsidiaries in seven African countries, including Zambia, Tanzania, Mauritius, Malawi, Mali, Mozambique and Zimbabwe (Wang, 2014). CACD entered Mozambique in 2011. Their Mozambican affiliate, mainly the company office and its processing lines, is located in Beira, the capital city of the Sofala province. It has exclusive access to approx. 700,000 hectares of land across three provinces of the country on a contract-farming basis. They bought the French-owned company, CDA, which helped them further expand their local influence. It is now among the three largest cotton production and processing firms in Mozambique, and the biggest one in the Sofala province (CACD, n.d.; Ren, 2014).

The financing model adopted by CACD is quite similar to that of Wanbao, namely self-owned capital plus supports from the CDB (loans&CADFund) through facilitation of CDB's local branch in Qingdao, Shandong. As a key shareholder, CADFund had invested more than 60 million USD in CACD's cotton business in Africa by 2014; and in Mozambique, the investment value had amounted to above 10 million USD. Despite the support from the CDB (CADFund and loans), funding still

[102] The author tried a number of times through different channels but still did not manage to get interview and site-visit opportunities with CACD. Given the representativeness of CACD, I did not drop the case but had to base largely on secondary sources.

stands as a major problem to CACD, particularly as the company expands its cotton business across the continent. (People.cn, 2013a; Wang, 2014)

In terms of organizing production, what CADC adopts is the typical contract-farming model. They do not have their own nucleus farm, except for small lots of land for seed breeding; instead, they work with over 30,000 local cotton smallholders who farm on their own lands. The company provided seeds and upfront capital to the contracted farmers, and assigned Chinese agro-technicians to help with the plantation process. During the harvest season, they set up hundreds of purchasing stations in the small villages to collect the crops from the farmers and transported the cotton to the ginning factory based in the port city of Beira. The purchasing price in 2014, for instance, was about 9-12 MZN/kilo, slightly higher than the unitary price set by the Mozambican government (Ren, 2014). The contract-farming model was believed by the CACD management to benefit the local community by helping enhance their incomes, while at the same time reduce the risk of land loss for the company in circumstances of policy changes (Wang, 2014). The operation of CADC also helped to increase the local cotton production. As confirmed by a Mozambican official, the cotton output in the province of Sofala had been enhanced from 2,000 to 5,000 tons since the company arrived (Ren, 2014).

Although CACD did establish processing facilities in Mozambique, only a small portion of the purchased cotton was locally processed. The majority of the raw cotton was shipped back to China (Pang, 2015; Wang, 2014; Xinhua, 2013). The processing activities were also constrained at very primary levels; for example, the facilities they built in Beira were largely only cotton-ginning factories and oil mills (for the cotton seeds). They did consider developing deep processing (e.g. yarn, textile and cloth manufacturing) and thus extending the value chain, which, however, seemed too costly in the African environment. As put by CACD Mozambique's manager, 'We'll have to import everything from China, even for the screws, and it'll take months to arrive, which greatly increases the costs' (Pang, 2015; Wang, 2014; Ren, 2014).

As mentioned earlier, the main market of CACD's produced cotton is China. The cotton industry in Mozambique is largely export-oriented. However, in terms of shipping the cotton back to China, CACD expressed their difficulty in not having import quotas from the Chinese government (Chapter 4.1.1). Without quotas, CACD would not enjoy any price advantages and have to compete face-to-face with other transnational cotton traders on the international market, for which the company found itself still in a very disadvantaged position (Wang, 2014). As to profits, after nearly fifteen years' operation in Africa, CACD had managed to make profit from its business. In 2013 the company earned about 6.5 million USD; however, it also expressed the difficulty in staying profitable (Wang, 2014).

4.2.3 Integrated Analysis: Prospects and Problems as Observed on the Ground

The 'agribusiness model' that features the incorporation of Chinese agro-firms and investment into China's agro-development cooperation with Africa, has aimed to help invigorate the stagnant agricultural sector of Africa through both intentional efforts and the natural spill-over effects of agribusiness, while in the meanwhile to facilitate Chinese agro-firms to go abroad and serve the development goals of China's own agricultural industry. As seen in the case studies in the previous section, this model has shown some positive prospects in terms of developmental impacts, for instance, through providing capital, creating jobs, supplying local markets with cheap foodstuff as well as cash crops and so on. That said, a number of challenges and problems have also been observed of this model, which have already affected and will likely to continue affecting the realisation of the expected 'mutual-development' goals. Some of the key challenges are to be analysed and summarised in the following section.

Financing

While the capital infusion may potentially help fill the gap and development of agricultural sector on the African continent, the fact is that the Chinese agriculture-based firms themselves also face considerable difficulty both given their own limited financial strengths as well as relatively limited supports from the government. This may not only constrain their own business development in Africa but also the spill-over developmental impacts of their investment projects on the locals.

Difficulty in financing was frequently singled out by Chinese investors as a key obstacle for them to conduct agribusiness in Africa. First of all, it was by no means a cheap investment as some might naturally imagine; or at least not so for the medium/small-sized agro-companies that made up the bulk of those engaged in Chinese agricultural foreign investment, including in Africa. There were indeed a number of pull factors in terms of the costs of doing agribusiness in Africa. For instance, land was more often than not provided at nominal costs, labour wages were also generally much cheaper than elsewhere (including China), and even inputs such as equipment, seeds and fertilizers that were generally expensive to local African farmers, did not form a particular financial burden to the Chinese investors for most of these machinery and materials could be imported from China at relatively low prices. Having said that, a large amount of investment was nevertheless required for infrastructure building. This did not only concern infrastructure that was directly demanded by agro-projects such as irrigation systems, but also, quite often, roads, bridges and electricity, needed in order to facilitate basic transport and processing activities. For the entirely uncultivated virgin lands or those that used to be cultivated but had been left idle for long, which was quite a common situation facing Chinese agro-investors - like in the cases of Wanbao and Hefeng – the costs for infrastructure building or rehabilitation were even higher. It was estimated that almost half, or even more, of the total investment needed to be put into infrastructure building (Interview, 10 Jan 2015).

Altogether, based on the data obtained in Mozambique, the investment for agribusiness on the African continent varied from 60,000 to 90,000 RMB per hectare. For a relatively large-scale project, say beyond 1,000 hectares, it then needed at least 60-90 million RMB (approx. 9-14 million USD) as an initial capital input. While this was not a particularly large amount for a non-agricultural project or a big enterprise, it was not an easy job for the medium/small-sized Chinese agricultural companies who earned only about 0.5-200 million RMB of revenue (approx. 76 thousand to 30 million USD) per year at home (NBS of the PRC, 2011) to finance such a project through self-owned capital.

Second, the financing channels for these medium/small-sized, and mostly private, agricultural companies were limited, and often 'biased'. It is true that, due to the underdevelopment of the domestic financing market and the high risks of overseas investment, fund-raising is generally difficult in China not only for agricultural but other types of investors too. That said, a series of factors such as the greater dependence on the climate, the relatively lower profits and longer period for capital returns, as well as the normally weak power of Chinese agricultural companies, have made it even harder for those agricultural foreign investors to raise the capital they need. By now, company self-owned capital and state supports were the two main sources of finances for Chinese overseas agro-investors (Chapter 4.1.3). This has been confirmed by the case studies in the present chapter. What is also confirmed, however, is the tendency of the state to support those state-owned enterprises or private companies whose mission aligns with the government's intentions. In the case of state-owned CAAIC, the three sources of finances – the self-owned capital from CNADC, the capital injection from CADFund, as well as the potential funds from SDIC – were, in essence, all using state capital. In the cases of Wanbao and CACD, both engaging with large-scale projects in significant crop types (rice and cotton), they both gained support from CADFund. Hefeng and other small-sized agro-firms in Mozambique – which actually represent the large majority of the Chinese agro-investors in Africa – were largely self-financed, and because of this, often face tremendous difficulty to survive or further expand.

Interestingly, even within the seemingly benign cooperation between the state and the private actors, in-depth examination has revealed certain tensions between the two sides. Take Wanbao as example. Mistrust started to emerge since the early stage of the agreement negotiation. The CADFund had once made an attempt to gain the majority holding of the project, but eventually gave up due to lack of expertise in agriculture[103]. Despite the abortion of the attempt, Wanbao had since been cautious towards its partner in order to maintain a leading role in the company's operations (Interview, 19 Nov 2013-c). Furthermore, as reported by a number of informants from different sources, Wanbao had, since 2014 - or even earlier - encountered severe financial and managerial problems. These were considered to mainly revolve around internal problems, but perhaps more importantly, around their unwise investment strategies[104]. In addition, the accountants assigned by CADFund to Wanbao were not

[103] What they proposed then was to let Wanbao be the majority shareholder (51% by Wanbao and 49% by CADFund) and take the full responsibility of the project operation and management, while the CADFund itself, apart from assigning a staff of their own to monitor the Wanbao's financial issue, will only regularly gain its deserved part of revenue from the company's yearly profits (Interview, 19 Nov 2013-c; Interview, 20 Nov 2013-b).

[104] The 20,000-ha proposal is indeed a really ambitious business plan compared to many of those even relatively sizable agro-projects in which Chinese companies invested in Africa, especially for a private agro-firm like Wanbao. What seems to be more problematic is that the company started to throw a large amount of capital into the downstream value chain, such as building large-scale processing lines and high-standard storage systems, even before reclaiming all the land allocated and thus without any corresponding productivity guaranteed. The downstream investment was so much that they later found

fully satisfied with the company's financial records in the recent years. As commented by one informant, 'While they (private companies) are always complaining about not getting enough support from the state, they themselves also do not do things up to the expected standards' (Interview, 10 Jan 2015). This 'unhappy' experience, particularly given the high profile of the Wanbao project in both China and Mozambique, is very likely to have some impacts on the future choice of the CADFund in terms of private partners and might make it even harder for private investors to seek financial support or form financial partnerships with state actors.

Production and Processing

The four cases above have confirmed the general observation in Chapter 4.1 that, the Chinese investors had primarily invested in the production aspect of the agribusiness value chain in Africa. This was almost an unavoidable choice, given the generally low agro-productivity on the continent. In terms of production models, similar to the general situation of Chinese agro-investment in Africa (Chapter 4.1), the Chinese agro-investors in Mozambique also adopted plantation farming, contract farming and sometimes a combination of both.

The productivity demonstrated through the different projects under investigation proved to be rather encouraging, usually much higher than the previous outputs without applying Chinese technology among other inputs. This is a positive sign that, leaving aside all other consideration and merely from the production point of view, the Chinese agribusiness model does bear the great potential to enhance the agricultural productivity and accordingly contribute to the food security or in terms of cash crops the export capability. And from Chinese company point of view, while this high productivity lay the foundation for their downstream business and prospects for greater economic returns. Furthermore, some more nuanced details revealed by the case studies suggested that agro-inputs in terms of seeds, fertilizers and equipment were usually imported from China; this may benefit either the investors or a broader group of Chinese agriculture-related firms.

While a large number of local Mozambican workers were employed – indeed a localized labour strategy was preferred by the investors *in the long run*, as revealed in the case studies – Chinese farmers currently made up the majority of working force. One of the challenges in the stage of production is the agro-technology transfer, as seen in the transfer of Chinese rice farming techniques to locals in the case of Wanbao (Chapter 4.2.1), and cross-confirmed by the case of the Chinese ATDC in Mozambique (Chapter 3.2). The language barrier as well as the different farming cultures, among other aspects of the relations, had slowed down the technology transfer process and thus casted doubt upon whether a localized labour-usage strategy could satisfy the production demand of the Chinese farms, and if so, how long it would take.

Investment in processing (and other downstream agribusiness), on the other hand, had remained at a very preliminary stage. According to the fieldwork, developing local processing lines still did not seem to be a very welcome option by Chinese investors, despite its potentially higher value added that may bring greater benefits to both to the

not adequate capital to be put into the fundamental production activities, including paying salaries to the workers, and therefore faced both financial and managerial problems.

investors and the host country in the long run. This is mostly due to the high costs it will entail: a large amount of investment was required, not only for importing the equipment from abroad but also for sorting out the infrastructure bottleneck such as the lack of electricity (and transmission) and roads. Particularly, for companies producing export-oriented commodities, as seen in the CACD case, they may prefer selling the raw or preliminarily-processed cotton directly to the international markets or shipping them back to China.

Markets and Profits

For all the Chinese agro-companies interviewed by the author, finding markets for their products was repeatedly mentioned as one of the biggest challenges. Take the rice value chain in Mozambique as an example. While it is true that there was a gap between domestic rice production and consumption, the gap had, however, already been well fulfilled by rice imports from a diversity of foreign producers, particularly Southeast Asia (e.g. Thailand), South Asia (e.g. India) and South America (e.g. Brazil). Over time, this imported rice (of different types and grades) had also occupied different segments of the local market, from middle/upper-class to the relatively poor. In light of this, the Chinese agribusiness firms did not seem to have carried out adequate surveys so as to develop a comprehensive marketing strategy concerning, for instance, which consumer group they were targeting, how to fit into the local market by integrating with the established sales channels, and how to distinguish themselves - especially newcomers - from other similar competitors. As of now, the main efforts, in terms of capital and human inputs, from Chinese agro-firms had been put into the production stage; no specified marketing department was in place and very few professional staff familiar with agribusiness marketing, not to say the local environment and language, were involved.

Instead, the way they had been engaging with marketing, or simply sales, was quite random. The companies that had the potential markets in their immediate vicinity, or at least within cost-efficient distance from their production bases, they tended to choose direct selling, without using any local sales agencies. They may open an outlet nearby their farms and sell rice directly to the locals as Wanbao did in Xaixai, or conduct door-to-door sales with the customers as Lianfeng did in Maputo and Hefeng in Beira. In some other cases, when they found direct selling impossible or too costly, they chose to depend on local sales agencies such as small retailing stores or big supermarkets. Examples were Hefeng's selling through local retailing agencies and Wanbao's selling through Chinese supermarkets in Maputo. Moreover, Wanbao, for instance, had expressed its hesitation in terms of conducting sales through agencies, mostly for the fear of losing control (e.g. over prices, profits) to the latter. However, they had yet to work out any effective alternatives.

Also, by the time fieldwork was conducted, the rice sales of all these Chinese agro-firms had been heavily dependent on Chinese communities in Mozambique. Wanbao's sales through Chinese supermarkets in Maputo was a typical case. Others who are not able, or cannot afford, to sell rice through Chinese supermarkets, tended to establish informal but constant links with Chinese buyers, particularly different Chinese companies. This had been the case for Hefeng (and other small-sized private agro-firms). Given the increasing number of Chinese people as well as the language convenience, it was definitely the easiest way for agribusiness companies to market their rice among Chinese communities. However, this strategy would surely not be sustainable: only considering the farms discussed in this paper, the total area amounted to at least 27,000 hectares. All productivity released, it would produce 135,000 tons/year, whereas Chinese people may consume only a frictional part of this. Indeed, fierce and even unfair competition among Chinese agribusiness companies has already taken place. Due to the difficulty in expanding to other markets, some bigger companies started to sell the rice at very cheap prices. As a consequence, those smaller companies who were unable to decrease the price would be squeezed out of the Chinese community market. This 'new' problem emerging in the agribusiness area, unfortunately, reminds people of the 'old' story of vicious internal competition among Chinese companies operating in a range of sectors on the continent.

In terms of expanding to external markets, it may well be outside the agenda of many medium/small-sized Chinese agro-firms. For some bigger players like Wanbao and CAAIC, they did consider the possibility of selling their rice abroad, which, however, also faced a number of challenges. First, there was policy restriction on grains export (including rice), given the food-insufficiency situation in Mozambique. Even if rice export was allowed, the poor transport infrastructure tends to increase the costs of inter-regional grain trade. Unless the Mozambique-produced rice was really successfully branded and can thus be sold at fairly high prices, on a large scale in the long run, it would be economically unviable to sell it in China considering the freight and tax costs, among other aspects. In addition, in terms of shipping the agro-products back to China, problems also lied in the Grain and Cotton Quota System, according to which Chinese agro-firms operating abroad either gain the quota from the Chinese government, or have to pay a higher tariff, similarly to any foreign importers. As mentioned before (Chapter 4.1.2), at the current stage, it is still quite difficult, especially for private agro-firms, to gain quota from the government. The CACD case discussed earlier has also confirmed this.

Furthermore, none of the agro-companies being examined in this chapter have been able to earn profits from their projects in Mozambique. This was indeed not only the case in Mozambique but it was a common situation for Chinese agro-investors in Africa (according to the author's broader survey and interviews). Given the general financial constraints facing Chinese investors, as mentioned earlier, successful sales seems to be even more important because revenues from the sales could be re-invested into the next round of production and thus reduce the pressure for the company to seek funds. The difficulty in sales, either in terms of finding markets or earning profits, as seen in the case studies, however, has further worsened their financial problem and made it even harder to make a successful agribusiness.

The difficulty in terms of finding markets as well as the economic unviability so far, caused by a variety of reasons as mentioned before, could become a serious impediment to the Chinese investors – dampening their enthusiasm in investing in African agriculture and thus diverting their capital and expertise elsewhere. Since the company actors and their commercial operation act as the cornerstone of the 'agribusiness model' of development cooperation, this may potentially have a major impact on the success or failure of the model, with implications to both the Chinese and African stakeholders.

Land Issue

To recap the 'motive analysis' earlier in this chapter, from the self-interest point of view, the current wave of Chinese agricultural investment in Africa, either for the government or private actors, is eventually resource-oriented – largely driven by the domestic land constraints in China. In this vein, the size of land obtained in overseas agribusiness activities, does matter. Small lots of land would hold little significance in fulfilling the demand-supply gap from a government point of view; nor would that satisfy profit demand of the private investors, even admitting the relatively lesser effect of the economies of scale in agribusiness. Furthermore, it is widely believed by the Chinese officials, scholars and businessmen that Africa, blessed by its land endowments, is an ideal destination for Chinese resource-oriented overseas agro-investment.

It is true that, comparatively, the African continent is abundant with land resources and still with great potential of arable land. According to an estimate of the World Bank, almost half of the world's uncultivated but arable land, amounting to 450 million hectares, is located in Africa (World Bank, 2013). However, as has been gradually recognized, the often seemingly less intensive use of land on the continent does not mean that the land is idle. Indeed, as pointed out by some scholars, virtually all valuable land is being used or at least claimed by local people (Anseeuw et al., 2012; Wily, 2011). Given the fact that investors would naturally be more interested in land that is fertile in quality, relatively well-infrastructured, easily accessed by transport systems, close to habitation and markets, among others, this sort of lands, understandably, have quite often already been intensively used by the locals for different purposes (Anseeuw et al., 2011).

Adding to the complexity, there are dualistic, both formal and customary, land tenure systems co-existing in the African environment and thus sometimes overlapping, if not conflicting, claims to the rural land rights. As a common practice prevailing in rural Africa, lands are often governed through traditional leaders/chiefs, by a set of customary rules deriving from, and sustained within, specific local communities, which determine how lands are owned, used and transferred. This is known as customary land tenure (Wily, 2012). While customary land tenure is effectively operating as an overriding principle in the rural areas, the land rights of customary landholders are not always recognized or protected by their governments in the form of statutory law (Anseeuw et al., 2011; Wily, 2011). In fact, the customarily held lands are more often than not overlaid with definition such as public, state, national, or government lands. Both systems, the customary and state regimes, claim legitimacy over rural lands (Wily, 2012; FAO, 2013).

Foreign investors, in most times, obtain land through formal government channels. Given the capital needs and the inexplicitly biased policies against smallholders, African governments generally adopt a welcoming, albeit increasingly discreet, attitude towards the commercial use of rural lands. They, therefore, tend to make lands available for foreign investors, and often at very low or only nominal costs. Due to the relatively weak presence of democratic governance in Africa, however, local communities are not always fully consulted and thus their land rights, particularly those of the majority of poor smallholders, are easily jeopardized in favour of more powerful government authorities or rural elites. This, sometimes leads to involuntary dispossession of land and water resources, deprivation of livelihood, inadequate compensation, among others, and thus forms the basis of the ‘land grabbing’ discourse (Anseeuw, 2011; Wily, 2011; FAO, 2013; World Bank, 2013).

Having said that, although foreign investors appear to be in a better bargaining position as fund-providers, the complex land situations on the continent also impose challenges to them. In cases where companies behave with responsibility, they have to accept the long time for negotiation and the high costs for compensation. In cases where they tend to cut the corner, risks are that they may provoke local resentments and conflicts, which may then cause financial and image losses, and even project failures (FAO, 2013). The dual land tenure systems also make the land contract signed with the governments not entirely stable or secure.

Linked to the empirical evidence obtained from the field, the case studies of Chinese agro-investment in Mozambique seemed to largely confirm the abovementioned dynamics and challenges around the land issue. All the four Chinese agro-investors accessed land through government channels, and despite the awareness of the increasingly rigid conditions for foreign agro-investors[105], they did not, in effect, encounter much difficulty obtaining the land areas they required. The local governments – in different regions and at different administrative levels – involved in the investment deals were generally very welcoming towards the investors, happy and quick in providing lands and facilitation, particularly in the initial period. They tended to have the investors secured and deals finalized as soon as possible. Arrangements such as the EIA (Environmental Impact Assessment) or RAP (Resettlement Action Plan), were not compulsorily required; nor the investors were informed about the local situations and potential problems (Chapter 4.2).

Conflicts with the local communities occurred, as seen in the Wanbao case. Neither adequate prior consultation nor appropriate compensation was in place (Chapter 4.2.1). This echoes the dualistic land tenure systems mentioned above. Indeed, Mozambique is one among several cases in Africa where customary land rights enjoy the greatest legal recognition and protection. In reality, however, as shown in the case study and also observed by other scholars, while investors seeking lands must consult with local communities, the procedure is ill-structured and undemocratic: it does not require organized participation and consent of the majority of the community, but only that of a handful of potentially self-selected representatives. Investors, therefore, enter into situations where local communities are unorganized and hence unable to negotiate on an equal footing with the investor (Wily, 2011), which was also confirmed by the case of Wanbao. As a result, different groups of locals were negatively affected by the operation of the project (Chapter 4.2.1).

For Wanbao, the production was disrupted by local protests. The company had to spend a large amount of time negotiating the compensation with locals. Equally importantly, albeit not seeming to be really recognized by the Wanbao management itself, the land issue had triggered considerable controversy and imposed negative effects upon the company (Chapter 4.2.1). Also, partly due to the case of Wanbao, other Chinese companies, such as CAAIC, seemed to behave more cautiously in negotiating contracts with the local government. They felt insecure about their

[105] This is mostly due to the increasing number of foreign investors.

contract, particularly whether the local government would be able to deliver its promise to provide the agreed amount of land, and also, about the modalities under which the resettlement would be solved and financed at the later phase. This led to years of negotiation and has significantly postponed the project progress (Chapter 4.2.2).

The opposite example would be the case of CACD. By adopting a different production model and thus land use strategy, the company had largely avoided land-related controversy (Chapter 4.2.2). This is also in line with the suggestions proposed by the World Bank that investors should focus on enhancing the productivity of existing land users (World Bank, 2013). However, it is worth noting that the Sofala province has the tradition of cotton cultivation, which makes the contract-farming model feasible. By contrast, in the case of Wanbao, it may take years before locals are able to well master the Chinese rice-farming techniques, and hence the company has to first establish from scratch its own nucleus farm, which, somehow, makes the conflicts between a first-time, inexperienced foreign investor on the one hand, and complex local conditions on the other, almost unavoidable. In short, despite all the potential benefits that could be possibly brought to the locals through the ‘agribusiness model’ of development cooperation, if the basic rights of residence and livelihood of the local people were deprived of, the claimed benefits are to be nullified or at least largely offset. There are hence many lessons to be learned both from China’s own experience such as those seen in the case studies, as well as a broader range of experiences from other foreign investors (Cotula et al., 2009; FAO, 2013 and 2014).

To sum up, as revealed by the four cases in this chapter, the ‘agribusiness model’ of Chinese development cooperation in Africa – while demonstrating certain positive developmental impacts in terms of, for instance, food security, job creation and poverty reduction – is also facing considerable practical challenges. These challenges not only constrain the profit margin and business prospect of the Chinese investors, but also limit the ‘developmental’ potential of these projects. Like what we’ve observed in the ‘innovative agro-aid model’ before (Chapter 3.2), implementation gap also exits in the ‘agribusiness model’. The distinctive ‘package’ model of Chinese development cooperation with Africa – as far as the agricultural sector is concerned – seems yet to fully achieve the ‘win-win’ expectation envisaged and still needs much reflection and adjustment in this experimental phase before it can exert greater effects. The following and also the final chapter of the thesis will start with summarizing the ‘mutual development’-oriented ‘development package’ model of China and then provide an integrated explanation to the implementation gap as mentioned above.

Chapter 0 Conclusion

Returning to the starting point of the thesis – the 'phenomenon' that triggered my initial interest to begin this research project – that is, the so-called 'emerging donors' or 'new donors' in the international development cooperation arena, and particularly those from the Global South. As already explained in the Introduction and also recognized by some more rigorous scholars, the expression of 'emerging/new' or even 're-emerging donors' by itself is misleading in several senses. First, these Southern countries are surely not 'new' or 're-emerging' actors given their decades-long, often non-interrupted experience of engaging in development cooperation (and aid more generally) even when they had much weaker economies compared to today. Also, they are not 'donors' and do not regard themselves as so – indeed they are all very opposed to being labelled this way and always try to distinguish themselves from the traditional DAC donors. By emphasizing another set of principles that feature cooperative relationship on an equal footing rather than the DAC kind of donor-recipient hierarchy, the Southern actors are more used to describing themselves as 'development partners' in relation to other less-developed countries.

The expression of 'emerging/new donors' *per se*, therefore, may have in fact implicitly demonstrated a sort of self-centric perspective of the DAC community, or more broadly, that of many observers from the advanced world in terms of looking at 'the others'. The Southern development partners are deemed 'new' apparently in relation to the DAC members themselves who are self-regarded as the more established actors (in actual fact they *were* and *still are* the most prominent players but have never been the only ones in the area of international development cooperation). The Southern actors being labelled 'donors' has further shown this 'DAC-centred tendency' of both the Northern policy circles and many of the research literature, for they just easily 'transplant' their own 'donor' titles (as well as the underlying logics) onto the Southern actors. Indeed, this is not merely a matter of terming, but rather something related to people's mentality; for instance, even though more and more literature starts to use the term of 'South-South cooperation providers', the Southern practices of development cooperation are still very much discussed and judged against the 'donor' model of the DAC, sometimes even with a genuine effort trying to help assimilate the former into the more 'mainstream' DAC standards and norms (Chapter 1.2).

Moreover, in line with this 'DAC-centrality', the existing literature either on the subject of Southern development partners or development cooperation more generally, has placed an almost exclusive focus on ODA, giving little attention to other forms that possibly also serve the 'development' objectives. ODA, instead of being a means, seems to be often treated as the end *per se*. The 'development package' model, for instance, that is often seen in the practices of Southern development partners, especially that of China and India, has usually been treated with suspicion and even criticism for the underlying self-interest-seeking motives of the cooperation providers. However, even in the Northern countries, the so-called PPP scheme has started to be applied in development cooperation practices, though still in its infancy, which bears noticeable similarity to the Southern 'development package' model. Cooperation modalities beyond ODA, therefore, are being experimented both by the Northern donors and the Southern development partners, and indeed quite necessary given the change of times and notably also the debated 'failure' of the ODA (Chapter 1.2).

It is against this background that I decided to join this currently heated but somehow biased (e.g. DAC-centred and ODA-exclusive) debate on the Southern development partners and help enrich the understanding of the Southern models through the thesis. I was particularly interested in investigating the beyond-ODA, 'development package' model of China, with the typical case of its agricultural development cooperation with Africa. In an attempt to balance the 'DAC-centrality', for instance, I have intentionally added in a historical perspective (Chapter 2) to help readers understand not only the differences of this specific package model of China compared to its DAC counterpart ('what it is not') but also how this disparate model has come into being – the history and the logic behind ('why it is what it is'). Meanwhile, given the limited empirical studies on Southern development partners, in writing this thesis, I have also spent extended time in Mozambique – one of the most representative African countries involved in agricultural cooperation with China – to collect more empirical evidence (Chapter 3&4) in order to flesh out the often abstract, general discussion around the topic.

Through the fieldwork, I've also been able to point out some practical problems occurring on the ground which accordingly led to certain 'implementation gap' of Chinese agro-cooperation policy in Africa. A systematic explanation to that was provided (to be detailed in Chapter 5.2) wherein the explanatory factors were grouped into three levels – the design and control of Chinese agricultural cooperation *policy* with Africa, the motivation and capability (among others) of the Chinese policy *implementers* and especially those front-liners, and the structural influence of the static and dynamic local implementation *environment*. And most prominent problem among these three has seemed to rest on the 'implementers' given their potential role in actively remedying the policy imperfections and effectively responding to the adverse environment. In particular, the lack of strong or true motivation of engaging in agro-aid and agribusiness in Africa – for both SAEs and private agro-firms (but perhaps more so for the latter) – and more importantly the limited capability of them in operating agro-aid and agribusiness projects in the African context have accounted for a large part of the 'implementer' problem. These three levels of factors, working together and synergistically, explain the 'implementation gap' as observed from the field between the expected objectives and actual outcomes of Chinese agricultural cooperation policy with Africa.

In the following part, I will go through the main findings of the thesis, particularly in response to the research questions raised in the Introduction (Chapter 1.3).

5.1 Chinese Way of Development Cooperation with Africa: The Case of Agriculture

This thesis, through investigating the case of agriculture, has demonstrated one of the most important features of China's contemporary development cooperation with Africa, that is the 'development package' model. The most direct driving force behind this more flexible cooperation modality, I would argue, is the more practical mentality of the Chinese government in terms of what to achieve from development cooperation, particularly as a developing country. The sixty-year history of China-Africa agricultural cooperation has well illustrated this point. Therefore, before summarising the 'development package' model, I will first briefly review the history and conclude how the essential idea of 'mutual development', among others, has evolved over the decades and thus paved the way for the emergence of the 'package' model.

5.1.1 On 'Mutual Development': What the History Tells…

Chapter 2 of the thesis has provided a review of the historical trajectory of Chinese agricultural development cooperation with Africa over more than half a century since the late 1950s. The earlier phase of Chinese agricultural cooperation with Africa, or, the 'pure aid' phase between the 1960-1970s, was driven primarily by political factors. Those more traditional forms of agricultural aid such as building farms and extension stations were used particularly as part of the diplomatic efforts of the PRC trying to break the Western blockade and strive for international recognition. Africa-oriented developmental objectives were surely under consideration – for the focal sector of agriculture *per se* was chosen not randomly but almost all at request of the recipient African countries given the significant role of agriculture to their people's livelihood. Thus we could see that from the very beginning, agricultural cooperation was dually motivated and mutually beneficial, serving both the development objectives of Africa to enhance the agricultural productivity and that of China – political but perhaps more essential in terms of the broadly understood 'development' – the acceptance and even survival as a newly established regime. The foreign aid reforms starting since the early 1980s left an important imprint on the later evolution of Chinese agricultural cooperation practice in Africa. Given the changing environment and thus policy priorities as well as the experiences and lessons accumulated in the earlier phase, the Chinese government made a series of efforts including adjusting aid scale, enhancing aid performance, and most notably, adopting an increasingly economically-pragmatic approach to conducting development cooperation (Chapter 2.1&2.2).

Accordingly, in the 'transition period' of the 1980-90s, Chinese agricultural cooperation with Africa underwent a process of consolidation and transformation with a growing emphasis on project efficiency, profitability and sustainability. The notion of reciprocal benefits and mutual development gained greater acknowledgement and reconfirmation from the government level, although in reality, it was still the traditional aid forms that prevailed while commercial activities took place only moderately. It is not until the 'New Era' starting in the 2000s that the opportunities for *actual* 'mutual development', especially in *economic* terms, finally matured. Apart from more traditional forms of agro-aid that still remained, two other new models of development cooperation in agriculture started to emerge, namely the 'innovative agro-aid model' exemplified by the ATDC project, and the 'agribusiness model' that features the use of agro-FDI as a way to boost the recipients' agricultural sector. Both of these two new modalities entail very strong 'mutual development' objectives; different from the 'pure aid' period, however, this time the Chinese government has tried to utilise development cooperation to promote and facilitate its own 'Agriculture Going Out' strategy whilst helping enhance food security and agricultural development of the African partner countries. The combination of 'traditional agro-aid' as well as the 'innovative agro-aid' and 'agribusiness' modalities constitute the 'package' that is applied in China's contemporary agricultural development cooperation with Africa (Chapter 2.3&2.4).

In retrospect, we could see that over the whole course of Chinese agricultural development cooperation with Africa, there has always been a clear self-development objective involved – more political during the 1960-70s and from the 1980s on increasingly economic oriented. Therefore, the 'mutual development', or more pertinently, the sort of 'exchange' ideology has been at play from the very beginning of Chinese external development cooperation practice; in other words, through development cooperation, China has been trying not only to help others, but also help itself. This is deeply rooted in the fact of China being a rather backward, 'third world' developing country for most of the time in the last century. It is thus a rational choice for China trying to strike a balance of using the limited resources between domestic development efforts and external development cooperation. Having said that, this process has not been devoid of mistakes and even at times failure. The setback caused by the once over-stretching aid giving, largely motivated by the proletarian internationalism ideology, during the 1970s finally led to a heated debate in Chinese leadership and thereby called a halt to the unrealistic approach to development cooperation. It is through this lesson, as well as the overarching policy shifts at the turning from the 1970s to 1980s, that the principle of 'giving aid according to own actual strengths' was approved by the leadership and gradually established; and the biggest reality at that time was, as admitted by Deng Xiaoping, that China was 'still very poor'.

With the Reform and Opening-up, Chinese 'actual strengths' (particularly in terms of the country's material power), does have increased tremendously, and accordingly the scale of its foreign development cooperation. However, the fact that tends to be downplayed and thus needs to be reminded of is that China until now is still a developing country that has not yet fully completed industrialization and meanwhile been confronted with a number of development problems – such as the highly imbalanced development across different regions, the still large number of people living below the poverty line, the slow economic structural upgrading and accompanied problems – just to mention a few. In terms of agriculture, more specifically, despite the great success of the country's agricultural development in the past thirty years, the agro-sector still carries significant, and indeed, rather challenging duties in the face of the increasingly tight land constraints, in terms of feeding the whole country, supporting the industrial development as well as providing livelihood to almost half of the population who are still living in the rural area (Chapter 4). That's partly the reason why the 'Agricultural Going Out' strategy was launched, and accordingly why while China is offering agricultural technology and finances in order to help others, it's been trying to make the best of this chance also to help itself. The 'mutual development' logic, therefore, is still valid in the current stage and acts as the guiding principle as long as China has not fully graduated from the developing world.

This forms a strong contrast with the Northern DAC donors who had already been quite advanced even back to half a century ago when they just started to provide ODA to the 'third world' countries. It is because of this entirely different 'starting point' that the DAC donors have always tried to make development cooperation as an *independent* agenda (often through a separate aid agency such as the USAID and DFID) with claimed purely *recipient-oriented* development objectives[106]. For some of

[106] The specific focus of the 'development objectives' as defined by the DAC donors, however, has been kept changing through the past seven decades – first 'economic growth' (through promoting productive sector and infrastructure development as in the 1960s), then 'poverty reduction' (through emphasizing agricultural and social sector development as in the 1970s and 90s), once 'macroeconomic

them, there is the psychology of 'repayment' at play given their colonial past; for some others, they claim altruistic humanitarianism. Either way, and insofar as only economic dimension is concerned (leaving aside political consideration behind aid-giving or development cooperation provision), it has gone beyond the stage for the DAC donors to directly use ODA as a mean to promote their own economic development or commercial benefits as conducted by the Southern actors, or at most, they do that only marginally such as in the form of tied aid. It may also be fair to say that the highly concessional, donation-style development cooperation is largely what the DAC donors can afford, which is however less the case for the Southern countries who may to varying degrees be constrained by domestic public pressure given their own underdeveloped population at home. Furthermore, it may even sound reasonable, despite the 'dislikes' of the recipients, for the DAC donors to attach certain conditions to their ODA for the largely 'free' nature of the latter – just another sort of 'exchange'. This abovementioned approach, therefore, is also rooted in the DAC donors' own history and particularly their identity as more advanced economies in relation to the recipient countries. Self-contained logic but just not really suitable or even comparable to the Southern countries.

In addition to the key idea of 'mutual development', some other characteristics of China's contemporary development cooperation models also have their historical roots. The design of the ATDC especially the commercial operation model that is entailed, for instance, while surely taking into account the dimension of promoting Chinese agro-firms to go abroad, is also evidently associated with the previous lessons of Chinese agro-aid in Africa, particularly the lack of project sustainability. This problem did not only largely reduce the developmental impacts of the aid projects, but also cause a great waste of Chinese aid funds. It is, therefore, against this specific background that the designers of ATDC brought sustainability issue to the core and innovatively brought in the business model (Chapter 3). Also, the technology-centric approach to agricultural development cooperation with Africa has a lot to do with China's own successful experience in leveraging agro-technology to boost the growth of the sector (Chapter 2). In terms of experiences with other donors, which are less touched upon in this thesis but could be good examples for the historical imprints, the 'development package' model, for instance, is believed by some scholars to be influenced by Japan's ODA practice in China as well (Bräutigam, 2009), and China's insistence on non-interference may well be linked to its earlier negative experiences with the Soviet Union trying to intervene Chinese policy making in the 1950s in exchange for aid to China (Niu, 2010).

In a nutshell, by adding in a historical perspective, the thesis has tried to make more clearly how the disparate mentalities and modalities of the Southern development partners – through the case of Chinese agricultural development cooperation with Africa – have been shaped by their different identities and experiences compared to

reforms' (as in the 'Structural Adjustment' period in the 1980s) and more recently 'good governance' (as in the late 1990s). Furthermore, it is already revealed (Morgenthau, 1962; Hjertholm and White, 2000; van der Veen, 2011) and empirically supported (Alesina and Dollar, 2000) that, *in actual fact*, the claimed recipient-oriented 'development objectives' have often been distorted by the donor's self-interest driven political and commercial pursuits. In this sense, 'mutual benefit', both in political and economic terms, has never been an exclusive mindset or practice to the Southern countries – aid in general, and even development aid more narrowly, has always been entwined with aid-givers' self-interest pursuits.

that of the DAC donors. And in so doing, I hope the thesis has also made the point clear that the choice of development cooperation models by different development cooperation providers is far from a mere matter of 'policy dialogue' or 'mutual learning', but boils down to the respective development status and own experience of them, which determines what they want to gain from the cooperation as well as what and how they can contribute to it. The attempt of some trying to 'converge' the Southern models to the Northern ones, is therefore, too DAC-centric and may well end up with frustration by neglecting those more 'structural' differences and hence obstacles.

5.1.2 On 'Development Package': The Logic, Practice and Prospect

To a large extent, the realistic attitudes towards cooperation objectives, as embodied in the 'mutual development' idea, naturally point to the more flexible cooperation modalities, the so-called 'development package' of China. There is no standard definition on what 'development package' is, but we could largely understand it as a mixture of a diversity of economic and technical cooperation forms, ranging from more traditional, ODA-like type of aid to broader commercial activities, typically trade and investment, with a view to promoting mutual development. In essence, it is pragmatic uses of different forms as long as they could possibly serve the expected goals. This 'pragmaticism' is very much in consistence with the practical-oriented ideology and experience of China's Reform and Opening Up, and notably Deng's 'black cat, white cat' metaphor[107]. That said, the 'development package' is not something that is proposed out of pure blind-mindedness, but rather, a measure that is still being tested, as a kind of new form of cooperation that not only differs from the DAC-model but also China's own previous practices. Against this context, the agricultural sector, which intrinsically entails the possibility for commercial operation, could be seen as a chosen pilot area. It is not guaranteed with better results or effectiveness, and indeed, as will be elaborated in more detail later on (Chapter 5.2), in many ways falls short of its intended purposes. But still, it could serve as a pool of lessons and experience, and may be modified and expanded to other development cooperation areas in the future.

Specifically, in examining Chinese contemporary development cooperation in the area of African agriculture since the 2000s, I have found that there exist three distinctive models, which I've referred to respectively as 'traditional agro-aid', 'innovative agro-aid' and 'agribusiness' models. The 'traditional agro-aid model', as the name suggests, remains largely the same as the previous agro-cooperation forms in the past decades during the 1960-90s, but with a greater focus on the role of agro-technology (Chapter 2.4). Hundreds of Chinese agro-experts have been sent to different African countries to help with agricultural development plan-making and technical-related issues. Constant exchange and training programs are held both in China and the counterpart African countries. Meanwhile, China has also actively participated in different multilateral cooperation mechanisms such as that with the UN-FAO and OECD-DAC, in order to collectively contribute to the development of African agro-sector. In addition, Chinese government continues to support building agricultural infrastructure and donate agro-materials to a number of African countries.

[107] The original quote is, 'It doesn't matter whether the cat is black or white, as long as it catches mice.'

The second model is termed in this thesis as 'innovative agro-aid model', which is typically exemplified by the Chinese ATDC project in Africa (Chapter 3.1). While at first glance the ATDCs look more like a hybrid of the different 'agro-aid' forms adopted before (e.g. farms, agro-technology demonstration/extension stations, experts dispatch), the 'innovative' part is displayed in the incorporation of company actors and commercial operation. The aim of doing so is primarily to fix the problems of project inefficiency and non-sustainability as experienced in the past (Chapter 2), thereby to enhance the performance and developmental impacts of these new aid projects; but equally important, the ATDCs are also expected to serve as a platform and entry point for Chinese agro-firms – not only those acting as the implementing agencies but other agro-firms interested in investing in the ATDC-hosting countries as well – to go abroad and conduct agribusiness. In actual practice, this combination of traditional aid and innovative business model is realised through the design of two consecutive operational phases of the ATDCs; specifically the three-year Technical Cooperation Stage wherein the centres are fully funded by Chinese government to perform the so-called 'public-interest functions' such as agro-technology demonstration and training, and then the Commercial Operation Stage in which the implementing firms are supposed to be self-funded through market-oriented production and meanwhile continue performing the 'public-interest functions'. For now, there have been two dozens or so Chinese ATDCs established across different African countries.

The last model as seen in China's current agricultural development cooperation with Africa is called 'agribusiness model' (Chapter 4.1). To certain extent, the 'agribusiness model' could be equalled as regular agricultural *investment*, but the 'developmental' nature of agriculture and agribusiness as well as some intentional 'development PPP' elements involved in many of these investment projects, make it at the same time also a vital component of the '*development* package' of China to help reinvigorate the agricultural sector and improve people's wellbeing in Africa. For instance, most of the Chinese agro-firms currently engage in the production stage of the agribusiness value chain and bring with them relatively more advanced agro-equipment and techniques, thus making a direct contribution to the productivity increase of the agricultural sector. The Chinese agribusiness projects in Africa often involve employing and training local smallholder farmers, either through plantation production or contract farming models, and hence help with creating more jobs and alleviating local poverty. Due to the limited production scale at the current stage, most of these Chinese investment projects, especially those engaged in grain-crop business, serve the local markets only and thus play a positive role in increasing food supplies and enhancing food security of the recipient countries. Furthermore, as revealed in the overall review (Chapter 4.1.3) as well as the case studies (Chapter 4.2), many of these agribusiness projects have been partially financed by Chinese government through concessional or commercial loans with a clear view to supporting African agriculture. In total, there are around 100 or so Chinese agro-firms who have invested in different countries across the continent, and thereby contributed to China's contemporary agro-development cooperation efforts in Africa either individually or through partnering with the Chinese government.

This 'package' model of development cooperation has also formed a clear contrast with that of the Northern donors where there has always been a line carefully maintained between the believed recipient-oriented ODA and self-benefiting commercial activities (e.g. trade and investment). A mixture of both, either through incorporation (e.g. tied aid) or combination (e.g. development package), would easily be regarded as inappropriate, if not immoral. Perhaps part of the reason for that can be attributed to the cautiousness deriving from memories of the colonial past, that is, the donors might try to avoid the possibility or at least impression of taking advantage again of the recipients through offering development cooperation or ODA. It seems that Northern donors have somehow constrained themselves by pursuing this kind of 'purity' of development cooperation – purely altruism no any self-interest (though not really so in reality), purely ODA (the more concessional the better) no commercial stuff – the ODA, therefore, appears to increasingly become the end *per se* rather than a mean, and indeed one of the possible means, to achieve development. While the Chinese (and other Southern development partners) who are without this sort of 'historical burden' and thus regard 'win-win' scenario likely achievable, the Northern donors, on the other hand, tend to behave more cautiously and perhaps also be more sensitive to any 'signs' of neo-colonialism (of themselves and others) in engagement with the recipients.

Having said that, it is worth mentioning that the 'package' model – particularly the 'innovative agro-aid' and 'agribusiness' modalities – bear close similarity to the 'development PPP' scheme emerging as a new trend in the DAC community in the past decade or so. As noted before (Chapter 1.2), there are two main methods whereby the private sector actors are mobilized through the PPP scheme, the 'Grants Model' or the 'LEGs (Loans, Equities & Guarantees) Model. We have seen, for instance, the ATDC project, especially the 'Commercial Operation Stage' is quite similar to the 'Challenge Funds' projects under the 'Grants Model', whereas the 'agribusiness model' is often supported by loans and equities provided by the EXIM Bank of China and CDB. In the actual practice, we could also find some common problems – most notable is the difficulty in trying to exert effective control of the behaviours of private sector actors as seen both in the Northern donors like the UK (DFID, 2011; ICAI, 2015) and that of China as will be elaborated in the following section (Chapter 5.2). Indeed, the 'LEGs Model' can be traced back even earlier to the last century – the British development finance institution, CDC, for instance, was established in 1948 and has had the idea of 'doing good without losing money' ever since. Therefore, it can be said that the 'win-win' idea is surely not only seen in the Southern development cooperation but does have been long been side-lined in the DAC community with the preoccupation on ODA, and accordingly been neglected by the academia.

At the current stage, however, the application of PPP in Northern development cooperation practice, though an increasing trend, is still largely outside the mainstream. Whether this new type of cooperation will be scaled up in the future may depend, among other factors, on what the DAC donors determine to do in the face of the challenges of ODA – to continue with its reform path as shown, for instance, in the Paris and Busan Declarations; or, more radically, to embrace a broader, more flexible methods of development cooperation. That said, at least one problem remains for the possible incorporation of business models into development cooperation for the Northern donors, that is, the relatively less powerful argument for 'win-win' given their identities/development status as advanced economies. The question won't be on whether a 'win-win' scenario is able to be realised; but rather, who is going to win more and who benefit less. Indeed, this problem is set to loom for China as it develops further in the future, gains more wealth and gradually cannot justify itself as developing country any more. But here, the solution does not lie in the 'giver' side – a better plan-design or new justification – but the 'receiver' side. It is down to the development cooperation recipients to decide which partner they would like to work with and even to certain extent they could accept as a 'necessary satisfice of interest' as a latecomer with a view to gaining development opportunities and greater, long-term benefits in the future. Furthermore, it also remains to see the actual effectiveness either of the 'development PPP' or the 'development package' (as to be conducted in Chapter 5.2) and the scope of them being modified to overcome their deficiencies, in order to know the prospect of these new models of development cooperation.

In brief, the thesis has tried to demonstrate in detail the beyond-ODA, 'package model' of the Southern development partners, through the case of Chinese agro-development cooperation with Africa, and has also found certain common ground between the Southern 'package model' and Northern 'development PPP'. This is important for it signifies a trend: a *reflection* upon the six, seven-decades of development cooperation both for the Northern donors and Southern actors, an *exploration* for different possible manners whereby development cooperation could be conducted, and possibly, a *reconfiguration* of the international development cooperation scheme in the coming decades. The thesis, therefore, may have captured the beginning of this transformation process, and contributed to the understanding of this process through its in-depth empirical evidence.

5.2 Challenges of the Chinese Development Cooperation Model: From a PPI Perspective

As noted before (Chapter 1.2), despite the innovation in cooperation modalities – as embodied in the 'innovative agro-aid' and 'agribusiness' models of the 'development package' in the case of agriculture – there has been so far a lack of evaluation of the actual results of these new models of development cooperation, thereby leaving it a question of uncertainty whether and to what extent this Chinese way of engaging development cooperation is more effective (versus the Northern ODA approach). In this vein, this thesis has made an initial effort in tying to *examine* and *explain* the actual outcomes through in-depth, fieldwork-based case studies. That said, given the limited number of cases entailed by the qualitative nature of research methods adopted, and the still short time of practice of these new modalities (starting only from the past decade or so), it is impossible for this thesis to provide an extremely comprehensive review or an ultimate evaluation of the effectiveness of Chinese 'package' model of development cooperation. What it can offer, therefore, is only a contemporary overview of that.

Insofar as this modest aim is concerned, I have found a number of practical challenges in the actual implementation of China's current development cooperation models. The identified problems (as detailed in Chapters 3.2&4.2) do not only make the projects fail to meet the proposed policy objectives, but have even caused some counterproductive effects. For instance, some ATDC projects, while having relatively limited effectiveness in terms of technology transfer and not seeming able to achieve expected sustainability, also experienced mutual mistrust and discontentment with the local partners, mainly due to unsuccessful interactions. Similar cases can be seen in the agribusiness projects as well, particularly considering the small level commercial success and the controversies raised around land and labour issues, among others. These problems, therefore, may cast doubts on to what extent the expected 'mutual development' objectives have been or will be realised. There are, therefore, certain *gaps* between the expectation and realities in terms of what Chinese agricultural development cooperation, or the policy of that, could possibly bring about. In order to give a more systematic summary, I will apply the 'policy-implementer-environment' framework of PPI analysis (Chapter 1.5) in the section that follows. While the three set of factors – those on the development cooperation *policy* itself, the *implementers* of the policy, as well as the implementation *environment* of the policy – all play an indispensible role, the 'implementer' element, as will be elaborated later, appears to act prominently in explaining the policy results (especially the 'gaps') as observed in the case of China-Africa agricultural cooperation; this is mostly because of the proactive role or the agency that the implementers could (at least potentially) exert to remedy imperfect policies and counter unfavourable environments in this particular PPI situation, but unfortunately the failure of the implementers in so doing.

5.2.1 Policy

Policy is defined earlier in this thesis as a purposive course of action proposed and adopted by government authorities aiming to deal with specific public issues (Chapter 1.5.2-I). Before going to examine the 'problems' at the policy level, it should be noted that China's contemporary development cooperation policy, featuring its 'mutual development' objectives and the 'package' models, is still largely a policy *in-the-making*, gradually coming into being only since the foreign aid reforms and China-Africa economic interactions both deepened in the latter half of the 1990s.
Furthermore, though having been publicly proclaimed in different official occasions, China's development cooperation policy is also something that is more *being practiced* than being carefully compiled and openly publicised as many of the DAC donors do. Hence it can be seen at best as at a set of loosely defined arrangement, which includes the basic ends and means but inevitably entails much trial and error and accordingly an incremental process of policy testing and learning. For this sort of policies, it is easier or just normal to find problems compared to those delicately designed policies; constant reflection and quick learning, therefore, is accordingly more needed. Specifically, at least two types of policy challenges – of ***policy design*** and ***policy control*** respectively – are observed in China's development cooperation policy in African agriculture.

In terms of ***policy design***, which involves the devising of key policy components particularly the objectives and action plans of a given policy (Chapter 1.5.2-I), I find there are at least three notable problems existing in the area of China-Africa agricultural cooperation. The first problem, or more precisely something that causes problems, is the *multi-objectives* involved in Chinese agricultural development cooperation policy in Africa. This is first shown in the co-existence of both Africa- and self-oriented objectives as informed by the 'mutual-development' mentality, but also demonstrated at more specific project levels – most typically, the ATDCs that combine the pursuits of developmental impact, business promotion and project sustainability all together in one project.

While policies with 'precise and clearly ranked' objectives are surely preferred especially for the sake of effective implementation (Sabatier and Mazmanian, 1979;

Sabatier, 1986), they are however rarely present in the real world. Therefore, multi-goals are just more demanding, but by themselves do not necessarily create a problem for implementation – as long as there are detailed and specifically designed action plans and no less importantly, competent and cooperative implementers in place to make sure that the disparate aims are able to be fulfilled simultaneously. For example, in the case of the ATDCs, adequate control over the company implementers, setting-up of a capable marketing team, close collaboration and communication with local partners, among other factors, are naturally required by the multi-objectives to be included as parts of the action plan. As revealed in the case studies (Chapter 3.2), however, none of these – at least for the time being – are effectively in place, thereby leaving the implementation of that multi-objective ambition almost a mission impossible.

In addition, the multi-objective design also easily causes confusion to 'outsiders', that is, the local African partners. The ATDCs, for example, are in most cases, particularly on official or diplomatic occasions, presented as an aid project, a gift from China to its African friends, with the primary aim to help enhance the continent's agricultural productivity through transferring China's most advanced agro-technology. While this is surely the case, it is only part of the whole story. The problem is that the African partners do not seem to have been well informed, consulted or negotiated with beforehand about the commercial objectives and mechanisms involved in the project beyond the agreed aid agenda, despite quite justifiable reasons (e.g. sustainability concern) behind them. What compounds the situation is the often Chinese-dominated management model of the projects, with quite limited local staff effectively involved. The actual outcome, then, is that the African partners see the Chinese aid-workers making business on the aid projects, with themselves, the supposed aid beneficiaries, to varying degrees being excluded from that process (Chapter 3.2). This, together with other reasons that will be discussed later on, contributes to the mistrust and discontentment of the local partners in certain circumstances.

The second problem concerning policy design is the *lack of specificity*, particularly in the policy action plans. Although the importance and some general guidelines of China-Africa agricultural cooperation have been highlighted and proposed on different official occasions, very few concrete action plans have so far been put forward, either in formal or informal forms, even after plenty of projects have been operating on the ground for years. In the case of the ATDCs, as revealed previously in the thesis (Chapter 3.2), there has been only one guideline document from the Chinese government, that is the 'ATDC Guidance'. While it does outline some key elements of the project such as the objectives, actors and tasks, the content in general is very basic. It is especially so concerning the final phase of Commercial Operation, which – given its dual objectives of seeking agribusiness opportunities and achieving project sustainability – is supposed to be the most innovative and very essential part of the ATDC project. The design for the Commercial Operation as presented in the 'ATDC Guidance' is rather simple and ambiguous, giving little concrete direction or suggestion as to how the implementing agencies could possibly and successfully run the Centres on a business basis. If this ambiguity is understandable given the early point the document was issued at when the ATDCs were still largely in their Technical Cooperation phase, there has nevertheless been no follow-up documents or informal communications between the government and implementers[108], that further specifies the implementation plan even during the Commercial Operation phase.

Similarly, in terms of the 'agribusiness model', after more than a decade of discussion, there still have been few comprehensive official documents or practical action plans in place; some more detailed, country-specific agro-investment guidance in different African states, furthermore, is even more lacking. The state support system is still in an immature phase, which has been confirmed by the case studies (Chapter 4.2). For instance, while few new supportive policies (e.g. financial support and insurance/tax measures) are set up to facilitate Chinese companies' agribusiness investment in Africa, some long-standing constraints such as the Import Quota System haven't really been modified either. No real measures are taken to facilitate or benefit private investors who normally face more difficulties in conducting overseas agro-investment compared to state-owned companies. Therefore, although there is a lot of policy encouragement as to the great potential and necessity of bilateral agricultural cooperation, when it comes to concrete measures of translating all that into practice, there sometimes seems to be an awkward vacuum.

The last problem in respect of policy design is the *inadequate consideration of local environment*. A typical example is the active encouragement of agro-investment by the Chinese government, particularly the enthusiasm for land investment as seen in the earlier years of this wave of agricultural engagement (Chapter 4.1.1), without adequate warning to the agro-firms about the complexity and difficulties of land issues and deals in Africa. This has seemed to – at least partially – contribute to the stalemate of many Chinese firms now operating agribusinesses in Africa. A similar case can be seen in the problem of economic unviability of the Commercial Operation phase of the ATDCs. It has already proven almost impossible or at least rather difficult, as the case study shows, for the ATDCs to be able to finance themselves through conducting agribusiness as expected by the Chinese government. In addition, the inadequate consideration of local environment is also reflected through the lack of incorporation of local personnel, either in terms of including them into the management team or consulting and collaborating with them whenever necessary. This is a common problem as seen both in the ATDCs and different investment projects.

Secondly, problems revolving around ***policy control*** are also observed in China's agricultural development cooperation with Africa. As discussed before in the thesis (Chapter 1.5.2-I), even though a policy *per se* is well designed, it is not complete unless effective control is present. This is mainly for the reason that a policy is rarely self-implemented; instead it depends on the cooperation of both the implementers and the target groups whose behaviours, however, are seldom naturally obedient. In addition, control is needed also as a way of macro-coordination given the often messy and inefficient state of multi-organizational implementation. In the case of Chinese agricultural development cooperation with Africa, the problem of (lack of) control is seen in almost all of the scenarios mentioned above.

[108] This is according to the author's personal confirmation with several front-line directors of the ATDCs in different African countries at different times in 2016 and 2017.

In terms of *control over implementers*, the control problem appears to be particularly relevant because the main policy implementers either in the ATDCs or investment projects, are corporate actors who instinctively, and quite understandably, have even less inclination to faithfully follow through government initiatives compared to government counterparts. Taking the ATDCs for example, with the aim of improving project sustainability, the Chinese government incorporates company actors into the government aid projects and makes them the key implementers on a daily operational basis. This is supposed to be a win-win scenario in the sense that, while the Chinese government provides a platform for the companies to seek business opportunities in Africa, the companies should in return take the responsibility for managing the government's foreign aid projects in a more efficient, and particularly importantly, more sustainable way. There is, however, no stipulation as to the obligations of the company actors, for example, what profit level should be attained in order to prepare for the ATDCs' Commercial Operation Stage, and how the profits should be distributed in the Commercial Operation Stage in order to sustain the 'public-interest' function of technology transfer. As a result, the implementing companies don't seem to be confronted with any serious pressure as to the performance of agribusiness in the Technical Cooperation Stage. Even if the ATDCs could possibly financially sustain themselves in the Commercial Operation Stage – this, nevertheless, might be even more problematic given the potential conflicts, in the absence of any effective control measures, between the profit-seeking motives of the companies and the supposed aid nature of the ATDCs.

Policy *control over target groups* in the context of external policy implementation indicates often not coercive regulations or restrictions, but influence or direction of their behaviours towards the policy objectives; and the measures also tend to be softer due to their lack of governing legitimacy over foreign citizens (Chapter 1.5.2-I). The target groups in the case of the thesis topic involve a diversity of local actors such as the African government counterparts, local farmers, businessmen, and NGOs. To pursue 'influence or direction' on the local actors, it requires, at the lowest level, adequate negotiation with them in the process of policy implementation. However, as will be analysed in more detail in the following section, while the Chinese government itself tends to take a rather hands-off position after the projects enter the implementation phase, the company actors lack both capabilities and motives to actively engage with the local actors. Therefore, the Chinese side (in terms of both government and corporate actors) seems to have very little leverage over the foreign target groups either through direct (policymaker) or indirect (implementer) influences. This affects the implementation result in different ways. For example, for those locals who act as co-implementers such as the African government counterparts, lack of influence on them leads to the inefficiency of implementation; for those locals who are largely the recipients or objects of implementation such as the farmers, lack of influence on them sometimes increases mistrust and resentment.

In addition, there are also *no formal coordination mechanisms among different implementers*. As introduced in the previous chapter, the Chinese government did establish a mechanism called 'Inter-ministry Working Mechanism on Overseas Agricultural Resources Exploration' which is comprised of 14 central-level ministries and led by the MOC and MOA. It is however more a mechanism for policy formulation rather than implementation, and even for the former purpose, it is indeed quite an empty one, existing largely only on paper. Furthermore, what is more urgently needed in the case of agro-policy implementation in Africa is the coordination between the governmental and the corporate actors, given that in this specific policy case, it is the companies who are working on the front-lines and playing the most important roles. The notion of 'governments setting up the platform, enterprises providing a performance' (zhengfu datai, qiye changxi), which is a common model for public-private cooperation in China, seems also at work in the current case of the country's agricultural policy in Africa. There is, therefore, no intentionally formed cooperation framework that aims to stick the government and companies together for a unitary foreign policy goal, be it securing overseas agro-resources or improving national image as far as the agro-policy in Africa is concerned.

5.2.2 Implementers

Implementers are the actors who put the centrally formulated policy into actual practice. In the case of Chinese agricultural development cooperation with Africa, and particularly under the 'innovative agro-aid' and 'agribusiness' models, we have seen two main groups of implementers. The most important implementers who take the direct executive role and work at the very front lines are the *Chinese corporate actors*. We have seen a wide diversity of them: mostly agro-firms but also companies from other sectors; companies of different ownership – state-owned, private and sometimes mixed; and companies operating at different levels – central and provincial. Among them, some are officially designated as policy implementers, as in the ATDC project; some are 'unintentional policy implementers', as in agribusiness projects, for although the companies largely follow their own agenda and would not consider themselves carrying out government policies, they nevertheless unintentionally contribute to the realization of the government policy objectives (Chapter 1.5.2-II). The second group and also secondary level of implementers are the *Chinese governmental actors.* They are also from different sectors, mostly the commercial and agricultural systems; and operating at different administrative levels – central or provincial. Although being governmental actors, they play a subordinate role as 'implementers', for they are not the ones directly involved with the policy execution, be it aid delivery (ATDCs) or investment projects. Instead, they are more in charge of facilitation and support. This actor mapping of all that are involved in the implementation of Chinese agricultural development cooperation policy reminds us of Hjern's concept of 'implementation structure' (Hjern, 1981), which does not only indicate complexity, but also impose significant practical difficulties on the collaboration among different parties.

As noted before, despite the synergy of the three variables (policy, implementer and environment), problems concerning implementers may have explained more about the observed 'policy gap' given the implementers' agency they could have potentially exerted. However, a number of constraints – including that of their ***capabilities***, ***motivation***, ***discretion*** and ***cooperation*** – have made them unable to play such a proactive role.

The first problem, and also a very oft-seen one, in this regard is the inadequate ***capabilities*** of the key front-line implementers, the Chinese agro-firms. The lack of capability of the Chinese agro-firms operating in Africa is demonstrated not so much in agricultural technical/professional terms; most of them are after all quite established agro-firms back in China, with fairly advanced agro-technology and equipment, well-trained technicians, and long experience in conducting farm activities and agribusiness. Therefore, they find little difficulty, for instance, in building and managing farms, organizing production and processing, as well as conducting agro-technology extension in Africa as seen in different ATDC or investment projects. The limited capability, instead, is shown more evidently firstly in their limited foreign language skills, lack of knowledge about local conditions, inexperience and sometimes hesitance in interacting with local actors, and thus *difficulty in integrating into the local environment*. This seemingly indirect constraint, however, has become a repeated theme all through the case studies of this thesis and formed an important obstacle to satisfactory results.

The Mozambican ATDC, for instance, while having little difficulty in the process of conducting agro-technology transfer (e.g. training, demonstration, and experiments), has been increasingly confronted with challenges due to their inadequate and ineffective communication with the local partners. Most of the time, the ATDC operated in a rather separate way. Communication was constrained only on administrative issues such as visa issuing, but seldom upon the management of the centre. This not only partially led to the limitation of the agro-technology transfer, but also caused some dissatisfaction on the Mozambican side as to the transparency of the ATDC's operation, including areas such as decision-making and finances. When the centre encountered problems, the Chinese staff tried to seek help from the Mozambican side but often found the results frustrating due to what they believed to be 'low efficiency' of the Mozambican partners, among other bureaucratic reasons. However, interviews with the Mozambican side revealed that they found the communication very difficult, and a larger part of the reason was attributed to the language barrier. As a result, mistrust and even resentment arose and accumulated over time.

In the case of investment projects, while the Chinese agro-firms can normally copy the Chinese agricultural production model and achieve high yield very soon after they launched the project, they don't seem to be competent in solving problems related to the local context, and don't seem to be able to create a successful business by transferring the production advantage into profits. For instance, as seen in the case of Wanbao, the company had very limited knowledge about the local social-political conditions. After years of operation, they still hadn't managed to figure out the role of RBL-EP in the Mozambican system, which was the most direct and important local partner of the company. They also did not understand why the local farmers protested against them, given that they had gained the land through formal government channels and obtained signed legal contracts. They felt hesitant to talk with the local NGO – the main organiser of the protest; instead, they spent most of their time talking with and trying to seek help from the Mozambican government, but turned out to be extremely frustrated by what they believed as the 'low efficiency and inaction' of the government. At the same time, the company didn't seem to have any clear marketing plan as to where to sell their agro-products, how to compete with the existing transnational traders; the same problem was also observed, to a lesser extent though, in other companies such like Hefeng. As a result of this, recent evidence has started to reveal internal and vicious competition among a number of Chinese agro-companies for they tend to, as a natural easier option, all target the Chinese community in Mozambique as their main market.

The reasons for this are multiple. The Chinese-dominant management model, for instance, explains an important aspect for the lack of communication in the case of the Mozambican ATDC. The challenges encountered by Wanbao among other Chinese agro-firms in their investment practice have much to do with their inexperience in operating in African countries. One common problem shared among all these different projects and thus is to be particularly stressed here is the human resource constraint of the Chinese agro-firms. There was no lack of qualified professionals who are well equipped with agro-technical know-how and are often very experienced. However, most of these technicians had very limited foreign language skills and little overseas working experience. Furthermore, there were very few people who are skilled in international business, or at least have some basic knowledge on the local environments (e.g. local political, social-economic, cultural conditions), acceptable language and negotiation skills. Indeed, language barrier and cultural ignorance of the Chinese staff were raised as the biggest difficulties by the management of Chinese projects (both for ATDC and investment) during the interviews (Interviews, 19 Nov 2013-c and 23 June 2017). In addition, these Chinese agro-firms seldom had a mature marketing team that endeavours to investigate local markets and formulate corresponding marketing strategies.

An ATDC, for example, had only a small number of staff, averaging a dozen or so, who are mostly Chinese; and the personnel structure was rather simple as well – normally a director, a technical team comprising several agro-technicians, a translator (optional, mostly in non-English speaking countries), an accountant and some other logistics staff (e.g. chefs and cleaners). This structure, while evidently showing an effort to meet the requirements for agro-technology transfer, demonstrated little attempt at fulfilling the centre's agribusiness function that was designed to serve both the commercial aim and the sustainability concern of the ATDC. Further, there was often not such a person, at least not someone who was particularly assigned, to take charge of the ATDC's external relations. Even the companies that were directly engaged with agribusiness did not often have a professional marketing team, nor any public relations department within the company structure.

Apart from the incapability in terms of integrating into the local environment, another important constraint on the company implementers' capability is their *limited financial strength*. As analysed in Chapter 4.1.2, the majority of the Chinese investment entities involved in the African agricultural sector are medium-small sized agro-firms with limited financial power. Further, under the current conditions, it is difficult for those companies to raise capital from the domestic financial market; their main support comes from the several policy-oriented national banks which, however, have a preference towards state-owned enterprises. Therefore, the companies often face great difficulties expanding the investment scale, as seen both in the performance of the ATDC commercial development and other general investment projects. The human resource constraint, as mentioned earlier, also has much to do with this; these agro-firms often cannot offer good salaries to attract qualified personnel and even try to reduce costs by employing as few staff as possible.

Even if the implementing agencies are largely competent, it doesn't necessarily mean that they are going to exert their capability at full strength. At least two factors can be seen at work in this regard: the implementer's own motivation, and the control from policymakers. We have seen in the previous section that policy control in the context of Chinese agricultural development cooperation policy is not particularly strong, which therefore gives more weight to the implementers' ***motivation*** – and more pertinently, their independent aims and the extent of congruity of that with the officially-set policy objectives (Chapter 1.5.2-II). Admittedly, there is certain congruity between the Chinese agro-firms' own aims and the government policy objectives, especially in terms of commercial considerations and the need for 'going out' (Chapter 4.1.1). Indeed, fieldwork interviews reveal that some of the agro-firms involved in the ATDC and investment projects do have true intentions of developing agribusiness in Africa. Having that said, however, that 'agribusiness' intention is neither the only nor always the most prioritised concern to many companies. In-depth investigation and follow-up tend to reveal a more complex picture.

For some ATDC-implementing companies, for example, developing agribusiness in Africa, particularly given all sorts of practical difficulties, is only an option rather than a must. It would be great if there were some good investment opportunities appearing, but it wouldn't be regarded (by themselves) as a defeat if they couldn't survive after the first three years. They wouldn't lose anything; in fact, by hosting the government aid projects, they could continually receive funding from the Chinese government (for at least three years or even more), which can produce more stable and in cases higher financial gains compared to what they could possibly gain from their home business given the fierce competition and difficult living conditions for the agro-firms in China. Carefully controlling the operational costs could bring even more profits. Earning money from hosting government aid projects is not an uncommon rationale for Chinese companies, and definitely not only the case for agro-firms. This may help explain, admittedly only partially, why sometimes the ATDCs are not seen to actively engage with the local markets or implementing companies expanding agribusiness by, for instance, putting in self-owned capital; for doing agribusiness might not be a prioritised or preferred option to them at all, whereas the project sustainability objective (supposedly realised through agribusiness) is apparently something that's cared about more by the government rather than by the companies.

In some investment cases, especially private ones, the investment scale is surprisingly huge although the investment strategy *per se* looks rather unrealistic. For example, Wanbao invested a large amount of money – a considerable percentage of that coming from national bank support – into the downstream value chain, such as building large-scale processing lines and high-standard storage systems, even before reclaiming all the land allocated to them and thus without any corresponding productivity guaranteed. Furthermore, they even planned to build a 'Wanbao city' which, according to the plan (Interview, 19 Nov 2013), includes office buildings, staff accommodation, basketball courts, swimming pool and so on[109], which seemed a bit too far-sighted for an agribusiness project and especially one that was still in its initial phase. The downstream as well as all the extra investment was so large that they later found inadequate capital to be put into the fundamental production activities, including paying salaries to workers, and therefore faced real financial and managerial problems. This seemingly unwise investment strategy, however, was adopted for the company's other hidden agenda. They tried to expand the scale of the project – their first overseas farming project – as quickly and visibly as possible, in

[109] I myself visited to the site for the prospective 'Wanbao city' where many of the planned facilities were indeed already under construction.

order to enhance the company's reputation at home and, among other considerations, pave the way for the company to be listed on the stock exchange. Therefore, what was really the concern for the company in question, instead of developing agribusiness in Africa, was to serve the company's own development strategy. Indeed, wisely enough, the company has seized the opportunity of government promotion of foreign agro-investment; otherwise it would be tremendously difficult for an agro-firm, particularly a private one, to raise enough money for foreign investment.

In the earlier section, we pointed out some inherent flaws of the Chinese agricultural policy in Africa from a policy design point of view, namely the multi-objectives, lack of specificity, and inadequate consideration of local environment. That said, as already pointed out, we did not exclude the possibility of achieving desired policy outcomes, and instead still left some hope for the implementers who might be able to modify the policies through day-to-day practice and experience accumulation, that is through the execution of positive ***discretion*** from the front-line implementers (Chapter 1.5.2-II).

Some very specific problems facing the ATDCs, for instance the training model and post-training application (Chapter 3.2), are understandably difficult for policymakers to fully foresee and take into account beforehand. They are instead easily observed once the project is put into practice and indeed not particularly difficult tasks for the implementers to solve through communication and collaboration with local partners. Turning to the investment cases, more discretion by the company implementers themselves is required to determine suitable investment strategies in order to run a successful business. The investment guidance from the government level is admittedly rather limited (and sometimes misleading) particularly considering the state interests and motives behind it, but agro-investment is, after all, a commercial activity that depends fundamentally on company decisions and operations. However, exactly because of the capability and motivation constraints of the implementers, as analysed earlier, the discretion that might possibly offset the flaws of the original policy design is also greatly limited.

Lastly, ***multi-organizational cooperation*** is also an acute problem in the implementation of China's agricultural development cooperation policy in Africa. As revealed earlier, actors of different types and from different administrative levels constitute a complex 'implementation structure'. Most important among these are government agencies and corporate actors. These are supposed to work in tandem with each other both as seen in the quasi-PPP model for the ATDC aid project and the state-led agro-investment initiatives. While corporate actors play a leading role on the front lines, the government agencies are supposed to play a supportive role when necessary. In reality, however, the government supportive role is more visible in the pre-implementation phase, such as chairing negotiation with African partners and helping channel finance for companies, but once the projects are started, the government side has seemed to take a rather hands-off attitude.

This is particularly evident when the front-line companies encounter problems in their daily operation, such as the land protests against Wanbao and the discontentment of local partners as seen in the case of the Mozambican ATDC. The companies involved in these cases turned out to be in a rather helpless situation, especially given their general incapability as analysed earlier. Reasons for this lack of cooperation are mutual. From the Chinese government point of view, they tend to regard the daily operation, including problems arising in this process, as solely the responsibility of the companies. They themselves are more a governor or supervisor rather than partner of the companies, and hence present only in diplomatic occasions such as accompanying local African politicians to visit the project sites or the annual inspection of projects. On the other hand, the companies either in the ATDC or investment projects, when interviewed as to why they did not seek help from the government in face of difficulties, expressed their hesitance in doing so given the complexity of dealing with government relations, explaining, for instance, that they often gained more criticism and pressure (for example, on their incapability and slow progress) rather than any constructive advices or actual help. This is the case for both the relevant government agencies back in China and the overseas government branches in the African countries. Because of this, the companies would rather act on their own instead of creating more trouble for themselves.

5.2.3 Environment

Environment here is defined as the setting/context wherein the implementation takes place, and that could possibly exert some influence/constraints on the implementation process, or, the implementers' behaviours. For an analytical purpose, the implementation environment can be further differentiated between *static environment* factors such as natural, political, economic, social, cultural conditions, and *dynamic environment* factors which involve actions and interactions among different actors (Chapter 1.5.2-III).

Examples of constraints imposed by ***static environment*** are many. For instance, as seen in the cases of the ATDCs, although the technology training *per se* went quite well, the absence of production conditions for local farmers (e.g. infrastructure, tools) and the different farming culture can make the aimed technology transfer a rather vain effort. The local environmental constraints are even more obvious for agro-investment. Factors such as the lack of infrastructure, the shortage of skilled workers, the existence of many long-standing foreign traders, and the complicated land issues, all make conducting agribusiness in Africa an extremely challenging enterprise.

Given the 'static' nature – that is, relatively stable within a certain period – of this type of environment, in theory it could be possibly taken into consideration either beforehand by the policymakers or later on by the implementers, and therefore the negative effect could to different extents be lessened. However, some prevailing notions (e.g. 'self-orientation', yiwo weizhu) and habitual practice (e.g. taking things for granted without proper prior survey) in Chinese engagement with Africa, not only in terms of agriculture, have made it difficult to avoid this sort of problem.

The constraints imposed by ***dynamic environment*** tend to be more proactive, and also more challenging to the implementers. For instance, in the case of the Mozambican ATDC, politics played out between the two local governmental agencies, the MINAG and the MCT (Chapter 3.2.1). Both wanted to be the local partner of the Chinese ATDC for their own interests. The MINAG, given its expertise in agriculture, seemed to be the natural choice and indeed participated a lot in the initial stage and even the land of the ATDC was provided by IIAM, the MINAG-affiliated research institute. However, in the end, for unclear reasons, MCT won out and became the formal partner of the ATDC, which inevitably left some resentment between the two ministries over the ATDC issue. The Chinese side, however, knew little about this, only to find the arrangement quite inconvenient because the centre had more direct relevance with MINAG that is also more powerful on many matters. What compounded the situation is that after the three-year Technical Cooperation Stage, the Mozambican government decided to transfer the centre to the MINAG with whom the ATDC had not directly worked. The MINAG took a rather strict attitude towards the ATDC, expressing discontentment about the centre and once insisting on taking over the chair of the ATDC director, which caused considerable, and entirely unexpected, trouble to the Chinese side (Interview, 19 Oct 2015).

A similar case can also be seen in the land conflicts encountered by Wanbao, the private Chinese agro-firm operating in Mozambique. The farmer protest against Wanbao over the land controversy was organized by FONGA (Chapter 4.2.1), a local NGO which had constantly targeted and criticized, and thus had a high level of tension with the government. As revealed by the NGO director, even FONGA itself didn't think it was the Chinese company to blame, but rather, their own government. They organized the protest more as a weapon to attack and pressure the government. They would even have liked to 'talk and cooperate' with Wanbao on the issue. However, in effect, while the government had largely ignored the situation, dismissing it largely only a 'routine trouble' made by its 'old friend', Wanbao, on the other hand, was directly affected both in terms of disrupting its normal production activity and harming the company's image.

In these two cases, certain similar trends appeared. Politics was playing out among the local countries' internal actors within which the Chinese could possibly play a role, but by and large were side-lined except for the direct negative effects imposed on them. It is admittedly quite a challenge for any foreigners/outsiders to be fully aware of and further able to manipulate such domestic and internal dynamics. However, that doesn't mean there is no room for any action at all, especially when their interests are directly affected. As seen in practice, however, the Chinese actors appeared to behave rather passively, and more importantly, not well equipped to actively engage and effectively deal with such situations. For instance, they couldn't be able to find a good negotiator or even a qualified translator from their team to talk with their partners, not to say their quite limited knowledge of the actual situations and complex dynamics that were going on.

We have by now examined the three aspects–policy, implementers, and environment– that contribute to explain the 'gap' between the expectations and actual results so far of Chinese agricultural development cooperation policy in Africa. To sum up, three points are to be raised here. First, it is worth highlighting that all the abovementioned variables as well as the sub-variables cannot be separated in making a sound explanation. For example, a policy with multiple or even competing *objectives* does not necessarily mean that the aims cannot be attained, if the *action plans* can possibly be designed in a more delicate way. The relative ambiguity and lack of specificity as of certain policy *action plans* does not necessarily lead to an implementation failure because the field *implementers* may well conceive of more workable schemes and thus well make up the design flaws of the policymakers. The extent of the *discretion* exerted in that sense, however, will strongly depend on the *capability and motivation* of the implementers involved. And discretion has to be dealt with rather carefully for it may produce undesired results if no proper *policy control* is in place. However, even the most competent and motivated implementers surely won't succeed without effective *collaboration* with one another given the often multi-organizational nature of the implementation process. *Implementation environment* has an inevitable shaping effect on the implementation process, thus the policymakers should bear that in mind during *policy design*, and also the implementers need to take them into careful consideration in their daily practice. Moreover, there is a higher requirement for the implementers to achieve successful interactions with local partners and even to create a favourable environment, which, again, will have to depend back on the *capability, motivation, discretion and cooperation* of the implementers. In a nutshell, none of these factors alone could fully explain the implementation problem; instead, the problem has to be explained through the synergetic effects of all the relevant factors identified. This is clearly shown in the case of Chinese agro-development cooperation in Africa, where neither the immature policy *per se*, nor the incompetent implementers, or the unfavourable environment is to blame; it is rather the imperfection of all these three key aspects existing and working together that makes it difficult to achieve satisfactory policy outcomes.

Second, having emphasized the 'synergetic effects' of different factors and indeed as already demonstrated in the analysis above, we could see a (potentially) much greater role of the 'implementer' element. Good policy may not be translated to satisfactory results as expected without qualified and motivated implementers present; on the other hand, well-equipped and effectively stimulated implementers can cope even under certain policy vacuum or evident policy imperfections. The same logic works also in the implementer-environment interactions where the implementers often have a great role to play in connecting, adapting and utilizing the given environment in order to gain the most from it, even it may not seem, at first glance, very favourable (and indeed quite often so) to the policy implementation. In short, the exertion of (positive) discretion and agency by implementers may well offset some of the adverse policy or environment constraints, which thus gives the former a greater weigh in the 'policy-implementer-environment' explanatory triangle. In this vein, at the current stage when SAEs are generally better qualified than many (not all) private agro-firms in China and also (comparatively) more closely aligned to Chinese government's intentions, it might be helpful to engage more of Chinese SAEs in the process of agro-development cooperation with African countries, and gradually extend to more private ones, in order to reduce the 'capability and motivation' risk of the latter and better serve the 'mutual development' aims.

Last, in spite of all these abovementioned challenges that can be observed from different aspects and levels, it is still too early to give any 'final evaluation' to the Chinese 'package' model of development cooperation. As already noted, China's development cooperation policy, instead of being a deliberately devised and read-made one, is more a policy-in-the-making and meanwhile put into real-life experiment – something that is typically seen in many areas of China's domestic policies, especially for new policies. Problems and challenges, therefore, are just normal and could be largely regarded acceptable *as long as* constant reflection and quick learning is involved (though it is worth a further research on whether this is present for China's agro-cooperation policy in Africa). Furthermore, the problems observed are also largely 'solvable', particularly on the policy (e.g. through better policy design) and implementer level (e.g. through choosing more SAEs at the current stage as noted earlier).

Concluding Remarks

With an intent to further the current research on the so-called ‘emerging donors’ and especially the Southern development partners, this thesis has chosen China as an example and investigated in depth the Chinese ‘package model’ through the case of its agricultural development cooperation policy and practice in Africa. In writing this thesis, I have made intentional efforts in three regards in order to overcome some of the limitations of the existing literature and thus help complement and enrich the on-going debate on the topic.

First, the thesis has added in a historical dimension so as to examine how China’s contemporary development cooperation model which features a strong ‘mutual-development’ mentality and more flexible cooperation modalities has come into being. It argues that China’s own identity (as a developing country) and experiences (as an aid recipient) over the past decades have played a significant role in shaping its current development cooperation model, and thus balances, to certain extent, the oft-seen ‘DAC/Northern-centric’ tendency of many in observing, judging and sometimes trying to assimilate the Chinese/Southern model(s). *Second*, the thesis has given an in-depth treatment to the ‘development package’ model that, as seen in the case of Chinese agricultural cooperation with Africa, comprises not only traditional, more ODA-like aid forms but also those that entail evident commercial elements, and compared that with the emerging trend of ‘development PPP’ in the Northern DAC community. It thus enriches the research on Southern development partners and that on development cooperation in general which both tend to focus almost exclusively on ODA. *Third*, the thesis has filled the gap of lack of empirical evidence in the existing literature by incorporating more project-level, fieldwork-based case studies on the Chinese/Southern development cooperation model(s). By doing so, the thesis also points out a series of practical problems in the implementation phase that otherwise may not be identified, and more importantly provides a systematic explanation for that ‘implementation gap’. It thus helps to reflect on the actual results and possible modification measures of the Chinese/Southern development cooperation policies[110].

From a theoretical perspective, furthermore, in order to explain the abovementioned implementation challenges, this thesis has adopted the ‘Public Policy Implementation (PPI)’ approach and established an analytical framework based on a ‘dialogue’ between the theoretical literature and the empirical data. It has thus found that three aspects – namely the policy *per se* that structures the implementation process, the policy implementer who are formally or informally mandated to carry out the policy, and the implementation environment wherein the policy is executed – have played a crucial and synergic role in accounting for the observed ‘implementation gap’ of Chinese agricultural cooperation policy in Africa. Moreover, although this analytical framework developed in this thesis is largely specific to the agricultural case, the problems revealed through applying this framework are not uncommon in the broader

[110] This is important for the current academic community on China-Africa development cooperation and the bilateral relations in general has seemed to be overwhelmingly focused on the pledges of the Chinese government, either in terms of policy statements or policy measures, and tended to prematurely draw conclusions on the “possible” implications to Africa. Few have clearly pointed out the challenges for the Chinese government to deliver its pledges (c.f. Alden and Large, 2011) and even fewer have clearly pointed out policy slippage/deficiency and explored the reasons behind that.

practice of Chinese contemporary development cooperation or other types of engagement with the continent – such as the deficiency of policy design, lack of policy control, incapability of policy implementers, inadequate cooperation and coordination among different implementers, and the general lack of knowledge and experience of operating in the African environment. Therefore, the 'policy-implementer-environment' framework may also serve as a useful analytical tool for analysing China's development and foreign policy implementation in other fields in Africa and explaining the implementation results.

There are a number of limitations of this thesis: primarily the limited number of cases due to the constraints of time and research resources, and the preliminary status in terms of the 'policy evaluation' given the still short implementation time of the policy in question. Also, while it is outside the scope of this thesis, it is quite necessary to explore more also from the recipients' perspective as to the execution and impacts of the Chinese model of agricultural development cooperation; for instance, not only the feedback from the Mozambican stakeholders in terms of specific projects as already included in this thesis, but also their attitudes towards this mixed combination of cooperation modalities in general. Particularly, the more I work on this 'development cooperation' issue, the more I find research on development cooperation – both that of Northern donors and Southern development partners and including this present work as well – needs to link more closely to the recipient countries' home-grown (overall and sectorial) development strategies and policies. Indeed, the lesson has already been learned, given the less satisfactory results of the ODA practice over the past decades, that development partners should encourage the recipients to exert 'ownership' in designing and steering the countries' development, and align the development cooperation efforts to the latter. Accordingly, in academia circles, perhaps more research is needed on how and how well the development cooperation models, be that of the Northern or Southern partners, have fit into the recipient countries' own development plans – if there are any (and imperatively, which are driven by real and strong political will); if not, how the development partners could assist the recipients to work out proper, country-specific development plans (but not through imposing any prescriptions), which is the core of achieving real development progress and the prerequisite for any effective development cooperation as well.

To conclude, despite a number of practical challenges for now as have been identified earlier (Chapter 5.2), the Chinese way of conducting development cooperation still bears large potential to serve the developmental objectives of less developed countries, and to become a useful alternative or complementary approach to international development cooperation. In the first place, by highlighting 'mutual development' (and accordingly the application of 'development package'), the Chinese (or more broadly, the Southern) approach may well address the underlying 'incentive' problem that is vital for both development partner governments and private sector actors. After all, we may have to admit that development cooperation or foreign aid is more often than not influenced by partner countries' national interests – though moral/altruistic or ideological factors do also play a role and sometimes quite remarkably. Part of the reasons for the so-called 'donor fatigue' among the OECD-DAC community in the 1990s, for instance, can surely be attributed to the end of Cold War whereby a significant political/strategic 'incentive' of aid suddenly withdrew from the stage. The more recent proposal by the Trump Administration, in line with its 'America First' belief, to cut the foreign aid budget (including the development assistant account) by almost one third provides another example of the possible prospect of ODA when no or inadequate, *direct* 'incentives' are involved. If mobilizing state resources to assist other countries' development is such difficult for *advanced* donors, the pressure of doing that for the Southern development partners can only be much greater in face of their own development tasks at home.

The economic reciprocity entailed by the 'mutual development', therefore, provides at least one of possible ways that may help increase the enthusiasm and likelihood (given the public pressure) for governments to participate in external development cooperation, especially in a sustainable way. This is perhaps even more so for the private sector actors who are intrinsically self-interest and profit driven. In order to mobilize resources from a larger group of the private sector (not only the relatively few who are devoted to philanthropy) and on a larger scale, it is necessary to allow for certain degree of profits to the participant companies – as in the case of those Chinese firms who are engaged in the 'development package'. Similar 'win-win' logic is also clearly incorporated in the Northern 'development PPP' scheme but as noted already, it might be more difficult for the advanced donors to realise this sort of 'transformation' both due to their deeply-rooted, ODA-dominated mindset (sometimes compounded by certain moral superiority and influence of the colonial past) as well as their much better-off development status and identities as developed countries.

Turning to the recipient end, furthermore, the Chinese way of development cooperation may well better serve those more *urgent* development needs of many less developed countries in Africa. One of the distinctive features of Chinese development cooperation is the prioritised focus on infrastructure and productive sector compounded by flexible financing package (grants, concessional loans and commercial loans). Having said that, this seemingly 'Chinese characteristic' in fact very much resembles what the Northern donors used to do in the earlier phase of their development cooperation in the 1950-60s when – in line with the then 'structural transformation and economic growth' approach to understanding 'development' – capital inflows were deemed very important and great emphasis was placed also to productive sectors and infrastructure building. As touched upon earlier, for varying reasons, the Northern donors later on shifted their focus increasingly to social sectors (e.g. health and education), micro-economic policies and 'good governance' from the 1970s on, which are definitely important and necessary especially from a *long-term* perspective and to forge a more sustainable development. The problem, therefore, is not that these new focuses are wrong, but rather they have been over-emphasized to the extent that those more fundamental elements to the *first-step* economic growth or takeoff *per se* – precisely the roads, grids, agriculture, manufacturing, and perhaps most significantly, *capital* that could start all these off – are unfairly downplayed.

Realities have thus shown limited economic progress especially in terms of structural transformation from agrarian to industrial societies in most of African states. It is surely not only the external development cooperation to blame, but it does prompt people to reflect on the use of the precious development cooperation or aid resources (for both the recipient and giving countries) – whether or not they have been put into the most urgently needed and potentially more productive areas. Or, given the fact that it may be sincerely difficult to gauge, qualitatively or quantitatively, which aspect (economic or social sectors) is more productive or needed – for instance, part of the reasons for the oft-observed limited results of Northern ODA may lie in that the effects of the donor-focused capability building through health and educational investment in the past couple of decades will show up more evidently in the long run. In that sense, development partners may need to walk 'on two legs', assisting both in terms of economic growth and social (and political) development. China, given its current comparative advantage particularly in financing and infrastructure, may well act as a positive (and perfect) complement to the Northern aid – whilst the Chinese development cooperation may assist the recipients to *seize* the momentum of growth first, the Northern aid could help them to *maintain* that. There is no need, therefore, for either one to conform to the other, and in terms either of motives or modalities; the Northern donors and Southern development partners are offering different types of assistance that however are both imperative to the development of recipients, in the immediate and more distant future.

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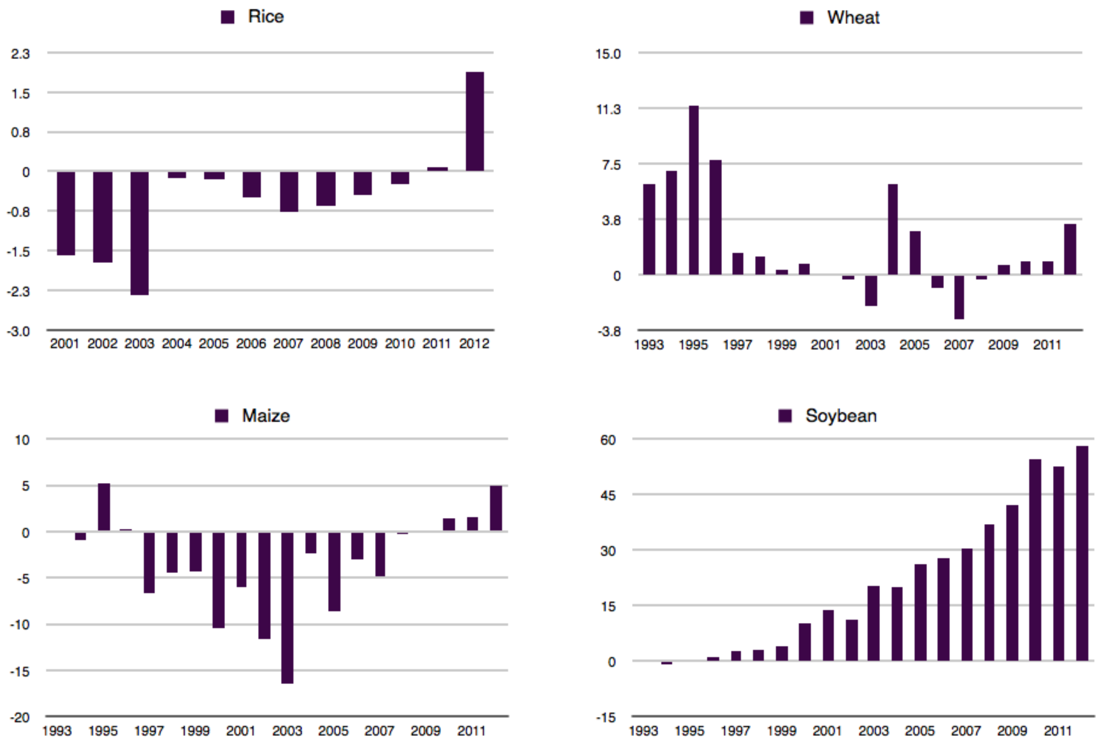
Appendixes

Appendix 1. Classifications of Crops as Used in the Chinese Context

Staple-food Crops			**Cash Crops**				
Grains/ Cereals	Beans	Roots and Tubers	Fibre Crops	Oil Crops	Sugar Crops	Tropical Crops	Others
Rice, Wheat, Maize, etc.	Soybean, Pea, mungbean etc.	Potato, Sweet potato, Cassava, yam, etc.	Cotton, etc.	Soybean, Palm oil, etc.	Sugarcane, Rape, etc.	Rubber, Sisal, etc.	Coffee, Tea, Tabaco, etc.

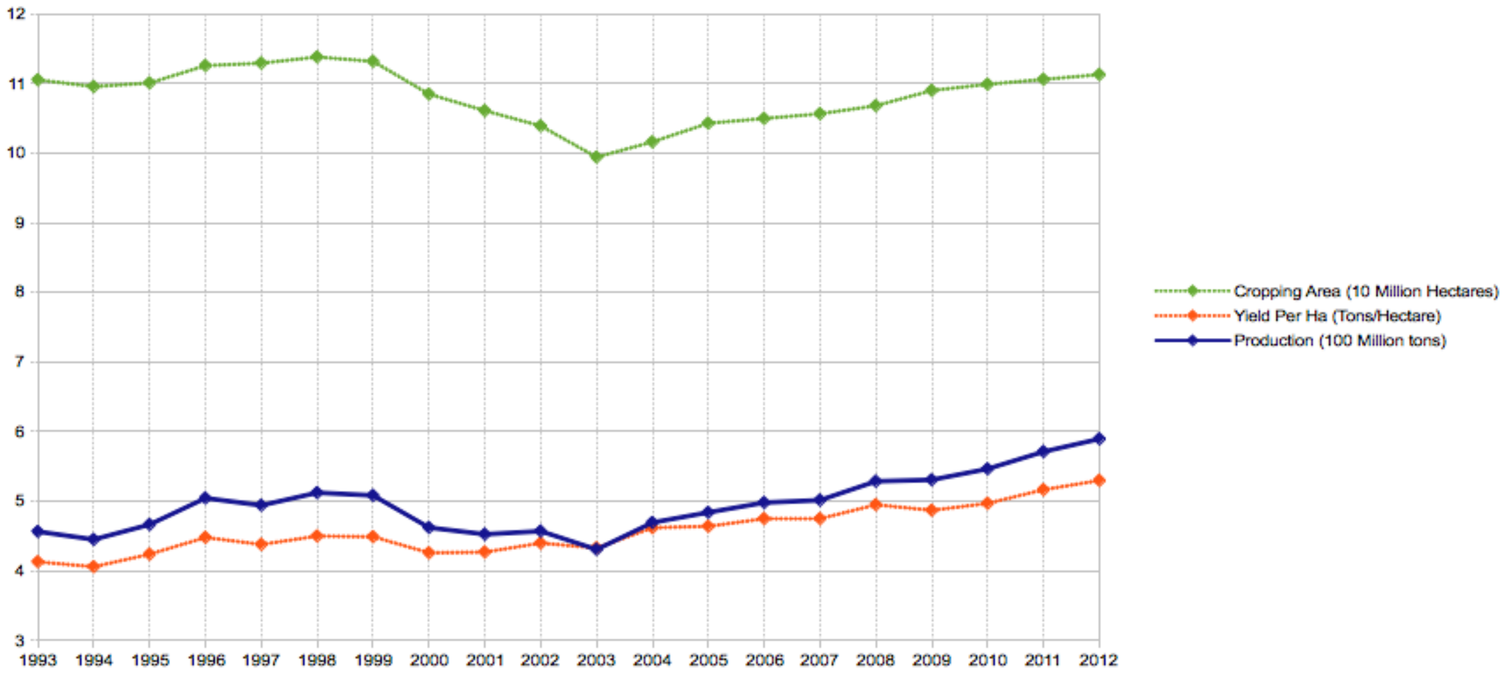
Source: The author.
Notes: This is a crop classification that is commonly used in the Chinese context, however it is not perfectly strict (for there may be some overlap between the two categories). Staple-food crops (liangshi zuowu), as defined by the Chinese government in its official documents, include mainly grains, beans, and root and tuber crops. Staple-food crops are used both for human food (kouliang, e.g. rice and wheat) and animal feed (siliaoliang, e.g. maize and soybeans). Cash crops (jingji zuowu) are those supposed to have more commercial value added, and can be used for both food and industrial purposes. Although cash crops can be used for food purposes, some, like oil and sugar crops, are quite indispensable – comparatively speaking, they are not imperative in food security terms. One of the tricky crop types for differentiation is soybean, which is treated more as an oil crop in China although the residue of it, the soybean meal, is also used as important animal feed.

Appendix 2. China's Net Grain Imports by Crop (Unit: Million Tons)



Source: The author based on data from Chinese Ministry of Agriculture.

Appendix 3. China's Grain Production (1993–2012)



Source: The author based on data from the Chinese Ministry of Agriculture.

Appendix 4. China's Grain Production and Self-sufficiency Rate (1993–2012)

	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Production	456.49	445.10	466.62	504.54	494.17	512.30	508.39	462.18	452.64	457.06	430.70	469.47	484.02	498.04	501.60	528.71	530.82	546.48	571.21	589.57
Exports	13.28	11.04	0.65	1.24	8.35	8.89	7.38	13.80	8.77	14.84	22.00	4.80	10.17	6.10	9.91	1.86	1.37	1.24	1.21	1.02
Imports	7.33	9.20	20.40	10.84	4.17	3.88	3.40	3.15	3.44	2.85	2.09	9.75	6.27	3.60	1.56	1.54	3.15	5.71	5.45	13.98
Net Imports	-5.95	-1.85	19.75	9.60	-4.18	-5.01	-3.98	-10.65	-5.33	-11.99	-19.92	4.96	-3.90	-2.50	-8.35	-0.32	1.78	4.47	4.23	12.97

Appendix 5. Overseas Agro-projects of CNADC

Company	Project/Subsidiary	Area	Main Business	Other Info
AFRICA				
CSFAC	China-Zambia Friendship Farm *(Zambia, 1990)*	670 ha	Crop farming (maize, soybean, wheat)	
	Cocoa Factory *(Ghana, 1996)*	N/A	Cocoa producing, processing and trading	Joint venture (China 45%, Ghana 55%); Not being operational since established and now looking for investors to take over
	Societe Sino-Guineenne Pour La Cooperation Dans Le Developpement Agricole S.A (*Guinea, 1996)*	N/A	Crop farming, animal husbandry, fishery, agro-processing and trading, technological consulting,	Joint venture (China 80%, Guinea 20%); Used to be *government agro-aid project* and transferred to CSFAC to operate in 1998
	Cooperation Agrotechnique Gabon-Chine (*Gabon, 1998)*	300 ha	Crop farming, animal husbandry, agro-processing	Joint venture (China 75%, Gabon 25%)
	CSFAC Friendship Farm (*Zambia, 1999)*	2600 ha	Animal husbandry, vegetable planting	
CAAIC	Zhongken Industry (*Zambia, 1994)*	3600 ha	Crop farming (maize, wheat), animal husbandry	Transferred from the CSFAC in 2010
	Tanzania Company (*Tanzania, 1999)*	6900 ha	Sisal planting and processing	Transferred from the CSFAC in 2010 and using the Government Concessional Loans of the EXIM Bank
	CAAIC&Yuanshi Company *(Madagascar, 2014)*	N/A	Hybrid rice planting	In cooperation with private Yuanshi company and the CADF of the CDB
CAIDC	ATDC *(South Africa)*	N/A	Freshwater aquaculture	*Government agro-aid projects*
	ATDC *(Benin)*	N/A	Crop and animal farming	
	Maize Co-research Project *(Benin)*	N/A	Hybrid maize planting	
	Soil Improvement Project *(Algeria)*	N/A	Soil improvement	
AUSTRALIA				
CSFAC	Australia Company *(1989)*	30,000 ha	Animal husbandry	
EASTERN EUROPE				
CAIDC	Ukraine Company	2600 ha	Crop farming (grains except for rice; soybeans and other oil crops) and diary farming	

Source: The author based on company websites and media reports.

Appendix 6. Some of the Major M&A Deals by COFCO since 2011

Year	Investment Targets	Value of
2011	Worldbest Biochemicals Cassava Processing Factory *(Thailand)*	N/A
2011	99% share of Tully Sugar Factory *(Australia)*	140 Australia (Around USD)
2014	51% share of Nidera *(The Netherlands)* *Nidera: One of the major international agribusiness and trading companies. It specializes in supply-chain business, connecting commodity producers and users. Procures agro-products from farmers, merchandisers and processors in the major producing areas across the Americas, the Former Soviet Union, Europe and Australia, and sells to Europe, the Mediterranean basin, the Middle East and Asia. Wheat, maize and soybeans are among the main crop types that Nidera is handling. The company is also strong in some crop technology aspects and set up extensive storage and logistics networks in its partner countries.*	1.2 billio
2014	51% share of Noble Agri *(Singapore-listed)* *Noble Agri: One of the leading originators of grains and oilseeds, e.g. wheat, maize, barley, soybeans in South America. It is also a top crusher and distributor in the Middle East and Asia. The company also trades some key types of cash crops such as cotton, sugar, coffee and cocoa.*	1.5 billio

Source: The author based on company websites and media reports.

Appendix 7. Agricultural Foreign Investments by Chinese Provincial State Farming Enterprises

The 17 Reclamation Areas That Have Completed the Conglomeration Transformation				
Reclamation Area	**Farming Enterprise/ Group Corporation**	**Investment Country**	**Investment Field**	**Other Investment Information**
Beijing (Municipality)	Beijing Capital Agribusiness Group	Australia	Animal husbandry	Purchased and managed local farms since 2010.
Tianjin (Municipality)	Tianjin State Farms Agribusiness Group Corporation	Bulgaria	Crop farming Animal husbandry	Purchased 100% equity of a local agribusiness firm including 3,400 ha of self-owned land, 5,700 ha of leased land and related equipment, storage and office facilities in 2014; planned to establish grain warehouses and processing factories in later phase.
Shanghai (Municipality)	Bright Food Group Corporation	New Zealand, Australia,	Dairy industry	Conducted four transnational M&A deals since 2009, including Synlait Milk (New Zealand), Weetabix (the UK), Manassen (Australia) and DIVA (France).
Chongqing (Municipality)	Chongqing Agricultural Investment Group Corporation	***Sudan***	Crop farming (Alfalfa, an kind of animal feed)	Gained access to 120,000 ha of land for Alfalfa farming as a way for Sudanese government to pay off its 20 million USD debts to Chinese companies.
Heilongjiang (Province)	Heilongjiang Beidahuang State Farms Agribusiness Group Corporation	Russia, Brazil, Philippines,	Crop farming (Soybeans, maize, wheat, rice, vegetables)	Had invested 24 million USD to lease approx. 47,000 ha of foreign land by 2009; the aim was to expand overseas land to 330,000 ha in the future.
Jiangsu (Province)	Jiangsu State Farms Agribusiness Group Corporation	***Zambia***	Crop farming (Grains and vegetables)	Had managed four overseas farms in Zambia, with land area totalling about 2,300 ha since early 1990s.
Anhui (Province)	Anhui State Farms Agribusiness Group Corporation	***Zimbabwe***	Crop farming (Wheat, maize, soybeans, tobacco)	Took over three overseas farms in Zimbabwe since 2010, cultivating 5,000 ha of land by 2013; planned to expand to 50,000 ha in the second phase by 2015; investment volume approx. 240 billion USD.
Shanxi (陕西)	Shanxi State Farms	***Cameroon***	Crop farming	Gained access to 10,000 ha of virgin land in Cameroon

Guangdong (Province)	Guangdong Guangken Rubber Group Corporation	Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, Cambodia, Vietnam,	Crop farming (Rubber)	Owned approx. 45,000 ha of overseas rubber plantations in a number of Southeast Asian countries by 2013; developed integrated value chain from seed breeding, planting, processing to trade,
Yunnan (Province)	Yunnan Rubber Industry Group Corporation	Laos, Myanmar,	Crop farming (Rubber)	Owned approx. 10,000 ha of overseas rubber plantation in Laos and Myanmar by 2011; developed integrated value chain including planting, processing, trade,
Hainan (Province)	Hainan Rubber Group Corporation	***Sierra Leone***	Crop farming (Rubber and Rice)	Planned in 2012 to cultivate 100,000 ha of land for rubber planting and 35,000 ha for rice planting in Sierra Leone; planned to develop integrated value chain including planting, processing, trade,
Guangxi (Province)	Guangxi State Farms Agribusiness Group Corporation	Indonesia, Vietnam, Myanmar,	Crop Farming (Cassava)	Had invested 200 million USD in several agricultural FDI projects, particularly in Southeast Asia by 2014.
Others: Gansu, Ningxia, Guangzhou, Kunming, Nanjing				
The 17 Reclamation Areas That Have Not Undergone Conglomeration Transformation				
Xinjiang (Autonomous Region)	Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps	Ukraine, ***Angola***	Crop farming Animal husbandry	Signed MOU in 2013 with Ukraine KSG Agribusiness firm to co-manage 100,000 ha of farmland on a 50-year lease, with capital input from the Chinese side totalling 2.6 billion USD; invested 160 million USD in building overseas farms in Angola with total area of 13,000 ha.
Inner Mongolia (Autonomous Region)	Hailaer State Farms Agribusiness (Group) Corporation	Russia	Crop Farming (Rapeseeds, wheat, barley)	Planned to invest 80 million USD in 100,000 ha of land under a 20-year lease in Russia, still in the discussion period by 2013.
Hubei (Province)	Lianfeng Overseas Agricultural Development Company	***Mozambique, Zimbabwe,*** Australia,	Crop Farming Animal husbandry	Had access to approx. 27,000 ha of overseas farms, with investment volume totalling over 130 million USD.
Others: Liaoning, Jilin, Hubei, Henan, Shandong, Shanxi (山西), Zhejiang, Fujian, Hunan, Jiangxi, Sichuan, Guizhou, Qinghai				

Source: The author based on company websites and media reports.

Appendix 8. Selected Examples of Chinese Private Overseas Agro-proje

Fields	Companies	Countries	Crop Types	Investment Mo
Grains	Muxue *(Chongqing Municipality)*	Laos	Grains, coffee, Chinese medicine,	Farm plantatio 100,000 ha) and
	Wanbao *(Hubei Province)*	Mozambique	Rice	Farm plantatio 20,000 ha) and processing
Oils	Fudi *(Zhejiang Province)*	Brazil	Soybeans	Farm plantatio 18,000 ha)
	Julong *(Tianjin Municipality)*	Indonesia (Liberia, Cameroon, Ghana, Kenya in plan)	Palm oil	Farm plantatio 150,000 ha), trade and logisti
	Huifu (Hebei province)	Brazil, Argentina, Indonesia	Soybeans, palm oil	Farm plantatio 200,000 ha), logistics
Cotton	Jinfang *(Shandong Province)*	Zimbabwe	Cotton	Farm plantat million USD of value), processi
Rubber	Gaoshen *(Yunnan Province)*	Laos, Myanmar	Rubber	Farm plantatio 13,000 ha) and p

Source: The author based on company websites and media reports.

Appendix 9. Interviews[111]

Interview with the former Chinese ambassador in Lawanda. Interviewed by Lu Jiang. Beijing, China. 23 Aug 2013.

Interview with the Chinese Economic and Commercial Counsellor of the Embassy of the People's Republic of China in Mozambique. Interviewed by Lu Jiang. Maputo, Mozambique. 9 Oct 2013.

Interview with the Chinese director A of the ATDC in Mozambique. Interviewed by Lu Jiang. Boane, Maputo province, Mozambique. 18 Oct 2013.

Interview with a Chinese staff A working at the ATDC in Mozambique. Interviewed by Lu Jiang. Maputo, Mozambique. 4 Nov 2013-a.

Interview with a Chinese staff B working at the ATDC in Mozambique. Interviewed by Lu Jiang. Boane, Maputo province, Mozambique. 4 Nov 2013-b.

Interview with the Chinese director A of the ATDC in Mozambique. Interviewed by Lu Jiang. Boane, Maputo province, Mozambique. 8 Nov 2013-a.

Interview with several Mozambican workers hired by the ATDC in Mozambique. Interviewed by Lu Jiang and Sérgio Chichava. Boane, Mozambique. 8 Nov 2013-b.

Interview with a Mozambican staff working at the MCT. Interviewed by Lu Jiang and Sérgio Chichava. Maputo, Mozambique. 14 Nov 2013.

Interview with two of Wanbao's management team. Interviewed by Lu Jiang. Xaixai, Gaza province, Mozambique. 18 Nov 2013.

Interview with a Chinese staff working for Wanbao. Interviewed by Lu Jiang. Xaixai, Gaza province, Mozambique. 19 Nov 2013-a.

Interview with two Mozambican agro-technicians working for Wanbao. Interviewed by Lu Jiang. Xaixai, Gaza province, Mozambique. 19 Nov 2013-b.

Interview with one of Wanbao's management team. Interviewed by Lu Jiang. Xaixai, Gaza province, Mozambique. 19 Nov 2013-c.

Interview with a Chinese staff working for Wanbao. Interviewed by Lu Jiang. Xaixai, Gaza province, Mozambique. 20 Nov 2013-a.

Interview with a Chinese accountant assigned by CADFund to Wanbao. Interviewed by Lu Jiang. Xaixai, Gaza province, Mozambique. 20 Nov 2013-b.

Interview with two of Wanbao's management team. Interviewed by Lu Jiang. Xaixai, Gaza province, Mozambique. 20 Nov 2013-c.

Interview with the director of FONGA. Interviewed by Lu Jiang. Xaixai, Gaza province, Mozambique. 21 Nov 2013-a.

Interview with two of Wanbao's management team. Interviewed by Lu Jiang. Xaixai, Gaza province, Mozambique. 21 Nov 2013-b.

Interview with the chairman of the DPA Gaza. Interview by Lu Jiang and Idalêncio Sitoe. Xaixai, Gaza province, Mozambique. 22 Nov 2013.

Interview with two female Mozambican farmers. Interview by Lu Jiang and Sérgio Chichava. Xaixai, Gaza province, Mozambique. 20 Dec 2013-a.

Interview with the chairman of RBL-EP. Interview by Lu Jiang and Sérgio Chichava Xaixai, Gaza province, Mozambique. 20 Dec 2013-b.

Interview with a staff working for CAAIC. Interviewed by Lu Jiang. Maputo, Mozambique, 7 Jan 2014.

Interview with a Chinese working for a private Chinese agro-company in Mozambique. Interviewed by Lu Jiang. Maputo, Mozambique. 29 Dec 2014.

Interview with a Chinese staff working at the ATDC in Mozambique. Interviewed by Lu Jiang. Boane, Maputo province, Mozambique. 29 Dec 2014.

[111] Only formal interviews included (see Methodology in Introduction).

Interview with the Chinese manager of CAAIC's Mozambican project. Interviewed by Lu Jiang. Maputo, Mozambique. 10 Jan 2015.
Interview with a Chinese staff working for Hefeng. Interviewed by Lu Jiang. Buzi, Sofala province, Mozambique. 14 Jan 2015.
Interview with the farm director of Hefeng. Buzi, Sofala province, Mozambique. 15 Jan 2015
Interview with a Chinese staff working at the ATDC in South Africa. Interviewed by Lu Jiang and Angela Harding. Gariep Dam, Free State province, South Africa. 29 Jan 2015.
Interview with a Chinese staff A working at the ATDC in South Africa. Interviewed by Lu Jiang and Angela Harding. Gariep Dam, Free State province, South Africa. 30 Jan 2015-a.
Interview with a Chinese staff B working at the ATDC in South Africa. Interviewed by Lu Jiang and Angela Harding. Gariep Dam, Free State province, South Africa. 30 Jan 2015-b.
Interview with several South African farmers working at one of the six fish farms. Interviewed by Lu Jiang and Angela Harding. Gariep Dam, Free State province, South Africa. 30 Jan 2015-c.
Interview with a Chinese staff working at the ATDC in South Africa. Interviewed by Lu Jiang. [By phone] London, UK. 8 Mar 2015.
Interview with the Chinese director B of the ATDC in Mozambique. Interviewed by Lu Jiang. [By phone] London, UK. 19 Oct 2015.
Interview with the Chinese director of the ATDC in Tanzania. Interviewed by Lu Jiang. [By phone] London, UK. 15 Nov 2015.
Interview with the Chinese director B of the ATDC in Mozambique. Interviewed by Lu Jiang. Shanghai, China. 23 Jun 2017.