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# Bureaucratic Pluralism and the Transformation of Development Cooperation

*Erik Lundsgaarde*



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**Erik Lundsgaarde** is a Senior Researcher at the German Development Institute (DIE), where his work focuses on the role of new actors in development cooperation. He is the editor of *Africa toward 2030: Challenges for Development Policy* (Palgrave Macmillan) and the author of the book *The Domestic Politics of Foreign Aid* (Routledge).

E-mail: [erik.lundsgaarde@die-gdi.de](mailto:erik.lundsgaarde@die-gdi.de)

© Deutsches Institut für Entwicklungspolitik gGmbH  
Tulpenfeld 6, 53113 Bonn  
☎ +49 (0)228 94927-0  
☎ +49 (0)228 94927-130  
E-Mail: [die@die-gdi.de](mailto:die@die-gdi.de)  
[www.die-gdi.de](http://www.die-gdi.de)

## Abstract

This paper discusses the role of sector-specific ministries as development cooperation providers. These actors have the potential to contribute assets such as funding, expertise, or access to networks for global development efforts. However they may also present challenges for development bureaucracies by advancing alternative priorities or by complicating coordination efforts at headquarters and partner-country levels. The paper situates the analysis of donor bureaucracies in current discussions on aid and development effectiveness and the transformation of the Official Development Assistance (ODA) policy field and outlines questions to guide future research on this topic.



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Bonn, September 2013

Erik Lundsgaarde





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## Abbreviations

AFD	Agence Française de Développement
BMZ	Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (Germany)
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DFID	Department for International Development (United Kingdom)
EEAS	European External Action Service
FAO	Food and Agricultural Organization
GAVI	Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
ODA	Official Development Assistance
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
QUODA	Quality of ODA
UNDG	United Nations Development Group
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WHO	World Health Organization



## Introduction

The diversification in the nature of the actors providing funding for development is one key element of the evolving development cooperation landscape. Interest in so-called ‘new’ actors in international development has been directed especially at aid providers beyond the membership of the OECD’s Development Assistance Committee (DAC), whether emerging economies or private aid providers. The increasing importance of these new actors was a stimulus for negotiating the Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation, a framework that acknowledges the value of the diverse experiences that actors can contribute to global development efforts. Within this framework, OECD-DAC donor commitments to align funding to partner-country priorities, harmonize assistance with investments from other donors, and improve the results orientation of aid remain at the core of the aid and development effectiveness agenda.

Even as OECD-DAC donors seek to enlarge the network of aid providers committed to aid effectiveness principles, they continue to face significant challenges in implementing these principles on their own. Donor coordination remains difficult in many contexts given the persistence of various national and institutional interests, and bilateral cooperation continues to be privileged over multilateral cooperation.<sup>1</sup> Although the appeal for greater harmonization suggests that coordination challenges primarily result from limited concertation between the states that make up the OECD-DAC donor community, coordination deficits may also persist due to the fragmented character of development policymaking within individual donor countries.

This paper explores the issue of bureaucratic pluralism within donor countries and discusses its implications for the future of development cooperation. While the distribution of authority in global development across diverse governmental entities has a long tradition in many donor countries, the expansion of the global development agenda creates an opening for ministries with expertise in specific sectors to assume greater importance in relation to the development agencies that have been the guardians of a development agenda dominated by the Millennium Development Goals and Paris Declaration principles of aid effectiveness. The involvement of diverse players within OECD-DAC countries in development policymaking may present an advantage in terms of mobilizing knowledge and building new partnerships or networks to support development goals or a disadvantage in adding competing goals and implementation channels for development funding.<sup>2</sup>

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1 In 2012, DAC donors provided roughly 71 per cent of their ODA through bilateral channels and 29 per cent through multilateral channels (OECD 2013b).

2 Because development is a multidimensional process and the interests of the large variety of actors contributing to development are diverse, the term ‘development goals’ can be considered a placeholder for numerous objectives such as sustainable economic growth, poverty reduction, or good governance. An assumption underlying this paper is that these goals identified with development cooperation as a policy field will remain relevant as a guide for international engagement in the future. However, these goals should not only be considered reference points in the narrowly defined policy field of development cooperation, but also across domestic and international public policy arenas. A key challenge for governments in the future will be to determine how to reconcile development goals with other policy objectives, both in terms of setting priorities and organizing external action to promote them effectively.

With a view to outlining a research agenda on the role of donor bureaucracies in the transformation of development cooperation, this paper proceeds as follows.<sup>3</sup> It first presents an overview of the division of bureaucratic responsibilities for development cooperation across the OECD-DAC donor community. In a second step, the paper discusses the implications of bureaucratic diversity for the implementation of the aid and development effectiveness agenda. A third chapter discusses how the topic of bureaucratic pluralism relates to the transformation of development cooperation as a policy field. The paper concludes by identifying questions for further research.

## 1 Line ministries in development cooperation: patterns across the OECD-DAC community

Reflecting the diversity of systems of political organization and differences in the priorities of development assistance even within the OECD-DAC community, there are variations in this donor club in how development policy competencies are divided among governmental actors. In some cases, the division of bureaucratic responsibilities reflects historical legacies where development cooperation emerged from a pre-existing multidimensional relationship between colonial powers and governed territories. For example, the central role that the French Ministry of Finance has played in France's development cooperation system stemmed from its importance in managing economic relations and monetary cooperation with former French colonies (Lundsgaarde 2013). In Portugal, sixteen ministries were involved in administering development cooperation in 2010, highlighting the mixed character of development goals and the historical importance of sectoral specialization in relations with lusophone countries (OECD 2010c). In other cases, the division of development policy competencies across diverse line ministries follows the logic of functional separation, where ministries are charged with managing elements of cooperation that lie in their areas of expertise. As an example, the Swiss State Secretariat of Economic Affairs (SECO), part of the Federal Department of Economic Affairs, Education and Research, holds responsibility for Swiss development cooperation instruments related to macroeconomic policy and trade and investment promotion due to its core competencies in the field of economic policy (Lundsgaarde 2013).

The OECD-DAC's analytical work provides a starting point for assessing the organizational set-up of donor aid programmes from a comparative perspective. For many DAC donors, aid management still takes place within a concentrated bureaucratic landscape. In concentrated aid management systems, the organization of development cooperation gen-

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3 The terms '*development policy*' and '*development cooperation*' generally refer to a policy field concerned with the promotion of the social and economic development of countries classified as '*developing*' based on national income levels, with development cooperation relating more directly to the concrete measures that are implemented in partner countries (transfers of expertise or financial resources) to foster development goals. As Ashoff and Klingebiel (forthcoming) note, development policy has a broader connotation that includes efforts to shape global regulatory frameworks to support development goals and to improve the coherence of policies within donor countries that have an impact on developing countries. Given the broad nature of development goals, there has long been an overlap between development policy and other externally-oriented policy fields. The transformation of development cooperation does not only refer to the changing actor landscape, the reconsideration of development goals, or innovations in development cooperation instruments, but also to reflection on the distinct contribution of development cooperation alongside other dimensions of engagement with developing countries.

erally centres on the donor's ministry of foreign affairs and a bureaucracy responsible for aid implementation. The OECD-DAC has identified four generalized models of aid management that highlight variations in the role of the foreign affairs ministry in development cooperation (OECD 2009c):

- 1) Development cooperation is fully integrated into the ministry of foreign affairs (examples are Denmark and Norway).
- 2) Development cooperation is designed and implemented by a specialized directorate or agency directly under the aegis of the ministry of foreign affairs (Finland, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, and Switzerland are among the examples).
- 3) Responsibility for development cooperation is divided between a (foreign affairs) ministry responsible for policy guidance and a development agency responsible for implementation (France and Sweden are considered examples).<sup>4</sup>
- 4) An independent ministry separate from the ministry of foreign affairs designs and implements development cooperation programmes (United Kingdom).

While these variations to some extent reflect the specificities of the political systems in which development cooperation as a policy field is embedded, the way that authority is distributed within and across bureaucracies can vary over time, responding to short-term political changes and external challenges.

Alongside these variations in organizational set-up, there are also variations in the extent of financing overseen by foreign affairs or development ministries. Donors which consolidate the design and implementation of Official Development Assistance (ODA) programmes are considered to have an advantage in pursuing coherent action and raising the profile of the development cooperation programme. For this reason, the OECD-DAC has often encouraged bilateral donors to rationalize aid administrations by placing all development-oriented work across government departments under a common strategic umbrella and increasing the coherence of country-level oversight of aid programmes (OECD 2009c). Reflecting broader efforts to rationalize Dutch public administration, the DAC peer review of the Netherlands indicated that an average of 87 per cent of Dutch ODA was overseen by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs between 2006 and 2011 (OECD 2011a). This figure is comparable to the amount of ODA administered by the United Kingdom's Department for International Development (DFID), considered a powerful global development player capable of influencing policy toward developing countries across government departments due to the agency's independent status and cabinet-level rank (OECD 2010d). As the British and Dutch cases suggest, consolidation or dispersion in development funding is not necessarily directly linked to the overall size of aid budgets. Birdsall and Kharas (2010) identify Greece as the DAC donor with the most fragmented aid system, even though it is among the smallest donors both in terms of aid volume and the percentage of national income directed to ODA.

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4 In the *Managing Aid* study, the German development cooperation system is also assigned to this category, as the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), an independent development ministry, is responsible for policy guidance and oversight of the development cooperation system, while assistance is implemented through a variety of other organisations, of which the Gesellschaft für internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) and the KfW Development Bank are the most important.

<b>Table 1: Key development bureaucracies in leading DAC donor countries</b>	
France	The Agence Française de Développement (AFD) is the primary operational agency, managing 66 per cent of French bilateral ODA in 2008. Its work is overseen by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Finance, which also manage important shares of the ODA budget on their own (OECD 2008b).
Germany	The last DAC peer review reported that the Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), a ministry with cabinet-level status, oversaw 54 per cent of the ODA budget. The Ministry of Finance was second in importance, overseeing 20 per cent of ODA flows due to its role in managing contributions to the EU budget and debt relief (OECD 2010a).
Japan	Following reforms implemented in 2008, responsibility for implementing ODA has been consolidated in the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs retaining an important role in providing policy guidance. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and JICA together oversaw two-thirds of Japanese ODA at the time of the last DAC peer review (OECD 2010b).
The Netherlands	The management of development cooperation has been fully integrated into the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which not only assumes responsibility for oversight of the large majority of ODA resources (87 per cent on average between 2006 and 2010), but also has a coordinating role for resources beyond its direct control (OECD 2011a).
United Kingdom	The cabinet-level Department for International Development (DFID) bears responsibility for development policy guidance and implementation and manages the vast majority of ODA resources (86 per cent in 2010) (OECD 2010d).
United States	The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) managed just over half of US foreign assistance funding in 2009. Another 17 per cent was managed directly by the US State Department, which has been a focal point for development policy planning, particularly following a process of organizational reform in 2006 leading to the consolidation of State Department and USAID budget planning (OECD 2011d).
Source: Author's own compilation	

The German development cooperation system appears on the surface to be similar to the United Kingdom's, as a rare case of a donor with an independent, cabinet-level ministry. Yet according to the statistics compiled in the DAC peer review process, the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) oversees a more limited share of ODA resources, suggesting that differences in the character of ministerial control in managing aid across countries reflect numerous factors. The competencies that development ministries possess within the political system in which they are embedded stem not only from the formal independence of development policy from other policy portfolios but also from the internal structure of these ministries and their role in policy implementation as well as the specific instruments they are mandated to oversee. In 2008, the DAC peer review of Germany noted that the BMZ administered only 54 per cent of German ODA, with the remainder being overseen by the Finance Ministry, Foreign Office, various line ministries, and the development cooperation programmes of the federal states (OECD



2010a).<sup>5</sup> The limited coordination mandate of the BMZ with respect to the international activities of other ministries and the existence of powerful implementing agencies separate from the BMZ in the German development cooperation system are considered to diminish the ministry's weight in the development policy system (Brombacher 2009).

In Canada, the bulk of the development portfolio was historically managed by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), an independent agency subordinate to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Its importance in ODA administration has declined in recent years, with the share of ODA funding managed by the agency declining from 75 per cent to 68 per cent between 2007 and 2009 as other government departments have assumed a larger international role (OECD 2012b). In March 2013, the Canadian government announced that it would fold CIDA into the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, a move considered to imply a closer alignment of Canadian development policy with foreign policy and trade objectives.<sup>6</sup> These examples suggest that even in cases where foreign affairs ministries or development agencies manage a declining share of ODA, they still continue to serve as the main focal point within their respective development cooperation systems.

Available information on the distribution of financing across bureaucracies in DAC donors remains limited. This is attributable in part to the difficulties that individual donors have in reporting such expenditures to the DAC and to the inconsistent manner in which information about funding flowing through different ministries is collected.<sup>7</sup> As an example, Austria lacks a consolidated ODA budget. The dispersion of funding across eight different ministries complicates the assessment of its full aid portfolio (OECD 2009a). Although DAC peer reviews provide an overview of the organization and management of development cooperation systems, they do this on a periodic basis with individual donor studies covering different time periods. There has to date been no systematic assessment of the importance of line ministries as aid providers across the DAC community. Hence, the perception that the role of sector-specific ministries beyond foreign affairs and development ministries is increasing in importance in the global development arena is largely based on impressionistic evidence.

Across the DAC community, a spectrum of line ministries beyond foreign affairs bureaucracies and aid agencies have been involved in administering some elements of development cooperation programmes for many years. Finance ministries have often been important due to their oversight of contributions to multilateral development banks or involvement in lend-

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5 In 2011, the BMZ administered 62.3 per cent of German ODA (See [http://www.bmz.de/de/ministerium/zahlen\\_fakten/Mittelherkunft\\_der\\_bi-\\_und\\_multilateralen\\_ODA\\_2010-2011.pdf](http://www.bmz.de/de/ministerium/zahlen_fakten/Mittelherkunft_der_bi-_und_multilateralen_ODA_2010-2011.pdf)). The exclusion of German contributions to the EU budget likely leads to an underestimation of the role of the ministry within the German development cooperation system, as the funding is ascribed to the Ministry of Finance though the Foreign Office and the BMZ assume a more important role in overseeing this funding. This suggests that the distribution of financing across ministries as reported to the OECD-DAC may not present a fully accurate picture of the political role that individual ministries play within a given development cooperation system.

6 See: <http://www.ottawacitizen.com/news/2013-budget/Foreign+Affairs+department+take+over+agency/8133658/story.html>.

7 Another complication in describing the global development orientation of line ministries is that funding classified as ODA may represent only one dimension of the engagement of these ministries in the country contexts where ODA is disbursed. Because the identity of line ministries centres on non-ODA policies, they may not understand their international work as development-oriented or distinguish international work sharply from other elements of their work programmes.

ing and debt relief. In Portugal, the Finance Ministry was responsible for 50 per cent of ODA between 2006 and 2009 (OECD 2010c), while Spain's Ministry of Finance and the Economy oversaw 28 per cent of Spanish ODA in 2009 (OECD 2011c). Other ministries disbursing aid funding include bureaucracies related to agriculture, defence, education, environmental protection, health, and migration. With the exception of defence ministries, these ministries can be distinguished from foreign affairs and development bureaucracies because their mandates are primarily domestic in character. The internationalization of the work of such domestically-oriented ministries is not purely a recent phenomenon. Following the end of the Cold War, for example, donors faced a transforming international context including the appearance of post-communist transition countries as important aid recipients and the rising prominence of issues such as environmental protection and migration (Kloke-Lesch 1998). These developments raised questions about the rationale and organization of development cooperation that parallel current discussions concerning the differentiation of partner countries and the management of issue linkages.

The dispersion of bureaucratic responsibilities for development cooperation is not unique to DAC donors. For major emerging aid providers including China and India, the multidimensional quality of development cooperation is reflected in a complex landscape of actors engaging in this policy field. In China, the ministries of Commerce, Foreign Affairs, and Finance play key roles in development policymaking, with some 28 additional agencies taking part in governmental coordination processes (Hong 2012). Smaller emerging aid providers such as Mexico or South Africa are currently working to define the role of development agencies as pivotal actors in managing development funding disbursed abroad (Romero 2012; Vickers 2012). Because of the traditionally important role that foreign affairs and development bureaucracies have played in many donor contexts in guiding and implementing development policy, the analysis of the global development role of a diverse set of bureaucratic players stimulates reflection on how to define the mandates of diplomatic and development actors in a political context where numerous governmental actors have relevant expertise to contribute to international cooperation within the ODA policy field and beyond.

## **2 Line ministries and the aid and development effectiveness agenda**

The examination of the distribution of bureaucratic responsibilities for aid management within OECD-DAC donor countries brings into focus several key challenges related to the transformation of development cooperation as a policy field. One main challenge concerns the aid and development effectiveness agenda and the role of sector-specific ministries in sustaining it. On the one hand, bureaucracies may vary in their awareness of or adherence to the principles of effective aid delivery outlined in the Paris and Accra agendas. On the other hand, the diversity of bureaucratic involvement in development cooperation can also affect the prospects for making progress in the realm of policy coherence for development.

### **2.1 Bureaucratic pluralism and the aid effectiveness agenda**

The ODA policy field has reached a level of maturity. DAC donors have learned from decades of experience in aid provision and have together with partner countries identified principles to make development assistance more effective. In a series of international

agreements in Rome (2003), Paris (2005), and Accra (2008), donors and partner countries committed to improving aid management by applying these aid effectiveness principles. Commitments to increase the responsiveness of development policy to nationally-determined priorities and to improve the extent of donor coordination represent central elements of this agenda.

The commitment to increase national ownership of development cooperation implies that partner countries are responsible for devising national strategies that outline development priorities and for developing country-level management systems to support the implementation of these strategies. At the same time, national ownership implies that donors are responsible for aligning their investments with these strategies and relying on partner-country systems as the preferred channel for implementing their assistance (OECD 2005/2008). While both partner countries and donors have advanced in terms of fostering greater national ownership, donors are considered to lag farther behind in fulfilling their commitments in this area (Wood et al. 2011).

Increasing national ownership in development cooperation creates a need for a process of reconciling donor and partner-country interests. As Martens (2008) suggests, aid agencies can be understood as actors that play a mediating role between the interests of partner countries and the interests of individual donors.<sup>8</sup> Within donor countries, they may be considered the actors that defend the interests of partner countries and support the promotion of development goals against a host of other national interests, such as diplomatic or commercial objectives (Faust / Messner 2012). In partner countries, aid agencies have the responsibility of balancing responsiveness to local development needs with their responsibility to oversee the effective use of public resources and to promote other national objectives. In contrast, in bureaucracies where development is not the primary mandate, designing policy to respond to locally-defined needs in partner countries is not necessarily self-evident.

Specialized development bureaucracies can be assumed to be more focused on aid effectiveness tenets as a guide for their work than other bureaucracies involved in aid disbursement. Some evidence supporting this assumption is found in the Quality of ODA (QUODA) assessment, which notes in its analysis of the performance of 152 governmental entities disbursing aid that specialized aid agencies are better at fostering institutional development and reducing administrative burdens in recipient countries in comparison to other bureaucracies such as foreign affairs and finance ministries. However, this analysis also reveals that aid agencies in the aggregate do not have an absolute advantage over other bureaucracies across all dimensions of aid quality. The QUODA assessment found that specialized aid agencies did not outperform other ministries on measures of efficiency, which include indicators related to the poverty and policy selectivity of aid, donor specialization and sectoral concentration, and the level of untied aid provided (Birdsall / Kharas 2010).

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8 The assumption that aid agencies play a mediating role between donor interests and the interests of partner countries implies a degree of neutrality that neglects potential interests that the aid agency or its implementing partners defend within a development cooperation relationship. An example is that donor agencies may prefer to continue to work in sectors in which they have accumulated expertise rather than to exit from particular sectors consistent with partner-country preferences and efforts to promote a more efficient division of labour among donors.

Although it is possible that these scores reflect the influence of other ministries over aid agency performance, for example through their role in shaping aid allocation patterns, the result nevertheless suggests that bureaucracies beyond classical aid agencies may also operate in a manner consistent with internationally accepted principles of best practice in aid delivery. Even though poor data availability makes it difficult to judge the performance of individual bureaucracies as aid providers, there is evidence of wide variation among donor agencies with respect to the integration of aid effectiveness principles in business practice both across different donor countries and between bureaucracies within a single country (Birdsall / Kharas 2010; Easterly / Pfütze 2008). These variations in performance should introduce caution in accepting development agencies to be naturally more capable of promoting international cooperation than other ministries. Ministries can bring different strengths to international engagement that may not be captured in performance criteria derived from development policy discourse alone.

The promotion of enhanced donor coordination is another important dimension of the aid effectiveness agenda, and the analysis of bureaucratic diversity within individual donor countries can complement existing approaches to conceptualizing donor coordination deficits. Limited coordination among donors is considered to be a source of inefficiency in aid delivery, contributing to the unnecessary duplication of donor analytical work, increased administrative burdens on partner governments due to differences in funding priorities and reporting requirements, and difficulties in fostering capacity development due to competition for qualified staff (Knack / Rahman 2007). In spite of international commitments to enhance coordination, the donor landscape continues to be fragmented.

Donor fragmentation can refer both to the dispersion of aid resources across partner countries and the dispersion or concentration of resources within particular sectors or regions at the country level (OECD 2011b). According to OECD estimates, roughly 40 per cent of aid relationships could be classified as ‘non-significant’ in 2009, reflecting the large number of donors providing funding on a relatively small scale across many partner countries (OECD 2011b).<sup>9</sup> The Paris agenda indicates that donors should withdraw from certain areas and delegate aid management responsibilities to other donors in order to address the problem of fragmentation.

In spite of OECD-DAC donor commitments to reduce the administrative burden on partner countries, the proliferation of aid programmes and projects has been a general trend in global development over the last two decades (World Bank 2008). This trend has been driven not only by the growing prominence of development assistance providers beyond

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9 The OECD considers aid relationships to be significant if either of two criteria is met. The first criterion relates to the donor’s share of aid within a given country compared to the donor’s share of all aid provided globally. The second criterion reflects whether a donor is part of a group of donors that collectively provide 90 per cent of aid to a given partner country (OECD 2011b). The first measure, designed to favour small donors, is problematic because it only requires a marginal level of concentration in an aid portfolio. The second measure of a significant aid relationship is problematic because it does not specify what degree of coordination exists within the ‘90%’ donor group. According to the OECD definition, fragmentation does not always imply limited concentration of aid resources in given country contexts. As the OECD (OECD 2012a) notes, in numerous countries a small number of donors may account for a large aid share, leaving a ‘long tail’ of small contributions from various donors at the margins that complicates aid management.

the DAC, but also by the proliferation of channels for implementation among DAC donors and a growing reliance on earmarked contributions to multilateral organizations that have led to the creation of new implementing structures.<sup>10</sup> To address problems of proliferation, the OECD encourages members to either increase their concentration of aid resources in particular country contexts or to exit countries where their aid relationships are not significant (OECD 2012a).

The coordination challenges that are emphasized in discussions on reducing donor fragmentation and improving the division of labour across and within partner countries generally consider inter-donor differences stemming from competing national interests and incentive structures to be key barriers to ensuring that the funding provided by diverse actors is more collectively effective (Williamson 2010). The challenge of inter-donor coordination may be compounded by fragmentation in aid management within individual donor systems, however. Bilateral donors are not always homogeneous development actors. At headquarters level, different governmental actors may not use consistent criteria for aid allocation. At the country level, investments overseen through alternative allocation channels from a single donor may not be closely coordinated. These deficits offer additional donor-specific reasons explaining why harmonization with other donors can be difficult to achieve. The dispersion of bureaucratic authority for development cooperation within bilateral donor countries therefore carries the potential to undermine efforts to promote more effective aid delivery at the partner-country level.

The proliferation of channels for cooperating with developing countries resulting from dispersed authority within donor countries or limited coordination among diverse donors are not only problematic because they can constrain the effectiveness of development cooperation at the country level but also because they represent inefficiencies that carry a monetary cost for donor governments (Bigsten / Tengstam 2012). The analysis of the issue of bureaucratic pluralism therefore directly relates to the question of how donors can organize development cooperation to maximize the value of development assistance both to domestic taxpayers and partner-country populations.

## 2.2 Bureaucratic pluralism and development effectiveness

Donor contributions to global development goals extend beyond their role in providing support to partner countries through development cooperation programmes. One important area where donors can contribute to creating better framework conditions for development

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10 Fragmentation in the provision of multilateral aid can be traced in part to the role of diverse donor bureaucracies as stakeholders in multilateral institutions. In the UN development system, for example, efforts to promote greater system-wide coherence are hampered not only by the internal governance of the UN system or the diversity of the member state interests that influence decision-making, but also by the variations in the actors within UN member states represented in the governance structures of the 36 agencies that are members of the United Nations Development Group (UNDG) (Weinlich 2011). In oversight boards of different UN agencies, member states are not necessarily represented with the same voice: agriculture ministries may participate in providing policy guidance and oversight of the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO), while health ministries play the same role with respect to the World Health Organization (WHO). If UN agencies face inconsistent demands originating from within single member states, it should not be surprising that incoherent action across the UN system might result.

is by adapting policies in a variety of arenas with implications for developing countries. The recognition of the importance of non-aid policies in promoting development has encouraged the more widespread use of the term ‘development effectiveness’ as an extension of aid effectiveness as a policy goal. Development effectiveness can be understood in different ways, including as a relabeling of the aid effectiveness agenda or as a concept that draws attention to various factors in addition to aid that can influence the achievement of development goals at the partner-country level (Kindornay 2011). One common connotation reflects the policy coherence for development agenda, emphasizing that governmental efforts to ensure greater consistency in the objectives of externally-oriented policy fields with development objectives and to improve the extent of cross-governmental policy coordination in areas such as trade, investment, migration, or environmental protection can generate significant development benefits (OECD 2008d).

The issue of policy coherence for development highlights key characteristics of donor foreign relations that are important in contextualizing the role of development cooperation alongside other externally-oriented policies managed by diverse governmental actors. First, it underlines that the foreign policy interests of individual donors can be heterogeneous. Because policy choices in different domains reflect an aggregation of diverse national interests and influences from international sources, they are not necessarily always consistent. The constituencies whose interests are represented in national trade or investment policies are not identical to the constituencies that actively seek to influence development policy choices, and the participation of specific governmental actors in policy formulation and implementation also varies across issue areas. Second, the discussion on policy coherence for development draws attention to the marginal character of the ODA-centric policy community in comparison to communities engaged in other policy fields. In promoting policy coherence for development, the aid policy community assumes an advocacy role in relation to policy communities whose domestic constituencies are more powerful.

The policy coherence for development agenda outlines multiple steps for donors to take in order to ensure that their foreign relations broadly support development goals. These steps include promoting greater consistency in the objectives that donors pursue and establishing cross-governmental mechanisms to foster policy coordination among governmental actors with different foreign policy mandates (OECD 2009b). As a spectrum of bureaucratic actors within donor countries expand their international engagement, the coherence of their action can be analysed from two perspectives. The first perspective relates to the consistency of international funding for development — the extent to which processes of strategy development, financing, and implementation are guided by common principles and do not undermine development goals. A second dimension relates to the extent to which policies and investments in different fields actively reinforce development goals (Keijzer / Oppewal 2012). This second dimension underlines that the expanding international mandate of sector-specific ministries is relevant beyond the issue of how to improve the management of development cooperation because it reflects the need for donors to adopt a comprehensive foreign policy strategy that elevates the pursuit of development objectives by more effectively bringing together the contributions of a range of policy fields and governmental actors.

The perspective adopted by proponents of greater policy coherence for development stresses the primacy of addressing development challenges as a foreign policy goal. The

orientation of this agenda is to suggest a transfer of development goals and principles to all public policy areas with a global dimension. However, to promote outcomes such as achieving consistency in purpose in external action and developing mutually reinforcing policies, a perspective on cooperation focusing on the reconciliation of objectives promoted by different governmental actors may be better adapted to a reality in which policy areas outside of development policy hold greater weight in domestic political systems and in terms of their potential contribution to changing the framework conditions that enable development.

As suggested above, the basic idea that donor contributions to development extend beyond financial transfers for development programmes administered through bilateral and multilateral agencies is widely accepted. Decisions taken in policy fields such as trade or investment policy have important material consequences for many developing countries. The multifaceted character of donor engagement with developing countries implies that the use of ODA as a benchmark for assessing contributions to development goals captures only one dimension of global engagement. Recognizing this limitation, the Center for Global Development's Commitment to Development Index offers an alternative benchmark. By assessing the development friendliness of aid, migration, trade, environment, security, technology, and investment policies together, the Index underlines the value of adopting a more comprehensive understanding of development policy that contextualizes the importance of ODA contributions alongside other policy emphases that may ultimately have a greater impact on economic development and poverty reduction prospects (Barder et al. 2012).

The term 'beyond aid' has many connotations, but is often used in a spirit consistent with the Commitment to Development Index to emphasize that the effective response to global development challenges depends on both funding and policy changes across a range of externally-oriented policy fields.<sup>11</sup> Although development cooperation has long served a variety of objectives, the expansion of the rationale of the policy field beyond a narrowly defined agenda that has recently focused on social development is becoming more apparent (Chandy 2011). The diversification of the actor landscape at the donor level in managing development cooperation follows from the expansion of this agenda. The contribution of sector-specific ministries to country-level cooperation programmes draws attention to the question of the consistency of development cooperation with broader regulatory policies influencing development outcomes, as the same governmental actors assume responsibility for shaping the policies that influence development framework conditions and for developing concrete initiatives addressing development goals within specific country contexts.

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11 *'Beyond aid'* can be shorthand for any of the following phenomena: the changing purposes of development aid, the increasing development financing from sources beyond the public resources from OECD-DAC donor countries, the use of innovative financing instruments to address global development goals, the process through which partner countries reduce aid dependency and donors prepare an aid exit, or the promotion of policy coherence for development.

### 3 Line ministries and the transformation of bilateral cooperation<sup>12</sup>

The examination of the distribution of bureaucratic responsibilities for aid management within OECD-DAC donor countries at present is not only important because it draws attention to how development cooperation can be made more effective, but also because this subject raises more fundamental questions about the scope, independence, and future of ODA as a policy field. This section explores the linkages between bureaucratic pluralism and the transformation of development cooperation.

#### 3.1 The changing issue agenda for development cooperation

The distribution of bureaucratic responsibilities in development cooperation outlined above is defined with reference to bureaucratic involvement in overseeing the disbursement of official development assistance (ODA). Although donors have some discretion in deciding how restrictively they apply the definition of the resource flows falling under the ODA label, ODA broadly covers concessional financial transfers to developing countries from public sources aiming to promote economic and social development (OECD 2008c). In practice, the definition used to chart donor development assistance spending patterns can encompass a range of official spending which does not necessarily involve a financial transfer to developing countries. Examples are funding related to the cost of housing refugees in OECD-DAC countries and scholarship costs for students from developing countries studying at universities in OECD-DAC countries. These accounting practices have been regularly criticized by civil society organizations (VENRO 2013). At the same time, the classical ODA definition does not include some forms of external financing that can be considered to make a development contribution. Examples include funding for military operations that potentially contribute to stabilization efforts in fragile states or funding for environmental initiatives (Vanheukelom et al. 2012). A further limitation in the existing ODA definition is that the concessional character may exclude innovative forms of development finance that seek to leverage public resources by mobilizing private funds for development purposes.<sup>13</sup>

These limitations of the classical ODA definition have led to proposals to re-conceive how national contributions to global development goals are reported and assessed. As one notable example, Severino and Ray (2009) have promoted the idea of replacing ODA as a benchmark with a broader concept of global policy finance, comprising funding from public and private actors designed to support economic convergence, investments in basic human welfare, and financing for global public goods. As Kaul (2013) suggests, the provision of global public goods such as a stable global climate is consistent with a country-

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12 Although bilateral development cooperation programmes provide the frame of reference in this paper, the general issues it raises can also be extended to multilateral settings where a diversity of mandates under an organisation's umbrella open the question of how to effectively manage external action in the future. As an example, the European Union continues to face challenges in institutionalizing the European External Action Service (EEAS) to support a comprehensive foreign policy approach (Smith 2013).

13 The level of concessionality of ODA-eligible loans has been an additional subject of controversy in ODA reporting, given that donors vary in terms of the grant element that their concessional loans include. The provision of loans with a low grant element allows some donors to inflate their ODA budgets and can distort the picture of the overall level of financial transfers to developing countries (Tew 2013).



focused development cooperation agenda given that investments in developing country capacities are necessary to ensure that these countries are able to contribute to global public goods provision. In line with Kaul's argumentation, the justification for investing in development cooperation could increase with an emphasis on global public goods, as the concept stresses international interdependence and the negative consequences of low governmental capacities to promote peace and security or environmental protection. While global public goods financing has already been included in ODA flows given donor support to address problems in partner countries with cross-border spillover effects (Reisen / Soto / Weithöner 2004), it nevertheless creates a possible trade-off with funding that is directed toward country-specific development objectives. The goal of supporting poverty reduction and promoting economic development in a given country context may overlap with the goal of increasing the capacity of states to contribute to global public goods provision, but promoting global public goods provision through development cooperation also implies shifts in the rationale of cooperation that could lead to changes in the allocation of resources to specific countries, sectors, and beneficiaries.

Calls for donors to increasingly prioritize financing for global public goods indicate that the issue complexes that development-oriented funding is expected to respond to are changing. One key illustration concerns the linkage between the global response to climate change and the ODA policy field. International climate negotiations have acknowledged a need to substantially increase the availability of financial resources to developing countries in order to facilitate low-carbon development and enable climate adaptation. Funding to support climate-friendly development and cushion vulnerable populations from the adverse consequences of climate change often has a purpose similar to ODA, and increasing the volume of ODA funding to address mitigation and adaptation challenges is considered one pathway to make progress in addressing climate goals (World Bank 2010). Nevertheless, the severity of the climate challenge suggests that resource mobilization through existing development assistance channels alone will be inadequate to grapple with this problem. International climate negotiations have therefore underlined the need to promote the principle of additionality of climate finance, even if numerous interpretations of the concept of additionality persist (Brown / Bird / Schalteck 2010).

As the notion of additionality implies, addressing climate financing needs will depend on contributions from a variety of public and private actors that are not necessarily part of the ODA policy system. Commitments to increase climate-related financing for development have emerged from international conferences where environmental ministries have played a leading role, even though development agencies have played a key role in the implementation of adaptation finance in particular (Pickering / Skovgaard / Kim 2013). On one level, rising interest in climate finance reflects an adjustment in priorities that can either supplement or compete with existing development cooperation programmes. While the promotion of climate stability and development can be considered mutually reinforcing goals, in a context where resources to invest in cooperation are limited, the climate agenda could for example lead to a reallocation of resources toward countries where mitigation gains are considered to be essential or to a shift within cooperation portfolios to support adaptation measures in specific country contexts. Whether a reprioritization within cooperation programmes linked to the climate agenda will also lead to the creation of new channels and instruments for cooperation that introduce coordination challenges remains an open question.

On another level, the growing importance of climate change as an issue complex impacting prospects for development creates new challenges with respect to mobilizing expertise to manage interlinked policy fields (e.g. energy and climate protection; climate adaptation and development).<sup>14</sup> While the expertise available in many development agencies encompasses a variety of sectors, this existing expertise may be insufficient in addressing the various dimensions of the climate challenge, including questions concerning technology transfer, efficient energy production and use, infrastructure development, and sustainable land use management. The climate policy field is only one of several areas where the overlaps between development policy and other areas of specialized expertise are becoming more apparent (Faust / Messner 2012). Other examples include the response to state fragility, which requires drawing expertise from the security and law enforcement sectors and the field of global health, where the threat of global pandemics underlines the interdependence of domestic and international policy fields. The demands on governments to combine expertise from different areas in order to address interlinked challenges raises questions about how well foreign affairs and development bureaucracies are able to fulfil the role of knowledge managers bridging sectoral divides while reconciling national interests with the interests of partner countries.

### 3.2 The changing country contexts where development cooperation takes place

It is not only the diversification of the priorities of cooperation between OECD and non-OECD countries and the importance of policies beyond the scope of classical ODA that are challenging the traditional boundaries of development cooperation as a policy field, but also the changing national contexts in which development support is delivered. The role that shifts in economic wealth and poverty around the globe play in contributing to a reassessment of development cooperation has been noted by many observers. The distinction between developed and developing countries is blurring with the rising economic fortunes of many non-OECD countries, while the heterogeneity of development pathways among non-OECD countries is also perceptible (Harris / Moore / Schmitz 2009; Koch 2012). The diversity of development pathways among ODA recipients means that the complex of interests driving the foreign policy choices of OECD countries toward non-OECD countries is not uniform: donors adopt a variety of policy mixes in engaging with non-OECD countries.

For some low-income countries, ODA continues to represent an important source of development funding. According to World Bank data, ODA receipts accounted for more than 10 per cent of Gross National Income in 36 states in 2010, with fragile states and small island developing states well-represented on this list (World Bank 2013). For many others, the economic importance of ODA is limited in relation to other forms of resource mobilization. ActionAid has noted that levels of aid dependency measured in terms of aid provided as a share of central government expenditure have been declining

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14 This discussion parallels analysis in the field of environmental governance underlining that advances in policy fields at the core of national economies that address the causes of environmental problems are critical in promoting sustainable development. Making progress in this area is dependent not only on the overall public policy goals that governments accept but also on the coordination structures that are created to manage the engagement of a variety of players whose actions influence the success of the sustainable development agenda (Jänicke / Jörgens 2006).

over the last decade even as aid flows have increased (ActionAid 2011). While ODA can continue to play a role in stimulating economic growth and improving the conditions for mobilizing other development resources, its relative weight in the development funding landscape is diminishing.<sup>15</sup>

Fragile states represent one end of the spectrum in considering how the country contexts where ODA is disbursed are changing. Fragile states are generally characterized as countries where governmental institutions have limited capacities to ensure the control of their territories and to provide an adequate level of services to their populations. The need for coordination both across the donor community and within individual donor countries is considered to be especially important in these contexts given the limitations in partner-country capacities to manage diverse actors and the contribution of collective action in supporting stabilization efforts (OPM/IDL 2008). Because such states have often endured conflict and poverty rates are high, donor responses to addressing challenges in fragile state contexts must have a multidimensional quality that implies a role for a variety of governmental actors in designing and executing policy. To re-establish order in a post-conflict context, resources from diplomatic, military, and development actors need to be brought together to pursue short-term stabilization goals while enabling long-term reconstruction efforts.

The need for effective coordination among governmental actors within individual donor governments has been summarized under the label of ‘whole of government’ approaches, defined simply as the pursuit of a coherent programme of action across the full spectrum of government departments engaging in particular country contexts. Although the rationale for adopting a whole of government approach is clear, achieving coherent cross-governmental action in practice is often difficult for a variety of reasons. Defence, foreign affairs, development, and other bureaucracies may differ in terms of how they interpret the nature of the problem that engagement is supposed to address and thus promote alternative priorities for engagement. In addition to these basic goal conflicts, achieving more consolidated action can be hindered by a lack of overarching political guidance for engagement and by bureaucratic incentives to limit staff investments in time-consuming consultations with other bureaucracies (OECD 2006). Possible remedies for shortcomings in responding to challenges in fragile states therefore include developing country strategies to place the action of individual donors under a common framework and linking personnel investments in cross-governmental coordination to career advancement opportunities (Patrick / Brown 2007).<sup>16</sup>

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15 A large number of countries continue to qualify as ODA recipients even as their levels of economic development and capacities for mobilizing resources through alternative channels have increased. One hundred and forty-eight countries and territories appear on the DAC’s most recent list of ODA recipients. There are 54 Upper Middle Income Countries and Territories on this list, including numerous countries (e.g. Brazil, China, South Africa, and Turkey) which provide development funding to other countries (OECD 2012c).

16 These considerations are not unique to the development policy arena, but reflect general dilemmas related to cooperation among government bureaucracies. In his classical treatment of bureaucracies in the American political system, James Q. Wilson (1989) notes that the desire of bureaucracies to maintain autonomy (“to protect turf”) leads to competition with other governmental actors to avoid intrusion on a bureaucracy’s core tasks. Coordination with other bureaucracies may not be considered necessary to fulfil an agency’s core objectives, and the participation of individual civil servants in coordination

At the other end of the spectrum in country contexts where governments are capable of mobilizing increasing domestic resources for development and the importance of ODA as a share of GDP is diminishing, donors face a challenge of transforming bilateral relationships, phasing out development assistance while potentially introducing other cooperation instruments that reflect a changing rationale for engagement that is more transparently interest-based. In a rare study on processes of aid exit and transformation, Slob and Jerve (2008) assess the experiences of four small-state donors (Denmark, the Netherlands, Norway, and Sweden) in implementing decisions to phase out ODA programmes in various country contexts, including in situations where graduation from development assistance due to gains in economic and political development in the partner country is a primary motive.<sup>17</sup>

The factors that make countries candidates for a graduation from development assistance also make these countries attractive as continuing bilateral partners for donor governments, underlining that phasing out ODA is not necessarily equivalent to reducing the level of political or economic engagement with a given country. In regional powers in particular, phasing out aid may in fact coincide with an increase in the priority attached to the bilateral relationship. The transition to new cooperation arrangements can involve a number of considerations for donor countries, including assessing which previous structures and instruments of cooperation can be usefully carried over to new bilateral cooperation programmes, how mutual interests in the bilateral relationship can be effectively promoted, and how lessons on effective development practice can be transferred to new fields of cooperation. According to Slob and Jerve (2008), while donors have expressed the goal of transforming bilateral cooperation in contexts of aid graduation, it is nevertheless often unclear what the nature of the transformation is. New forms of bilateral cooperation may actually be very similar in nature to the ODA that they displace. Yet the transition can also entail new funding sources from within a donor country or an adjustment of the weight of certain instruments in the donor's aid portfolio, creating pressures for organizational reform within country-level missions to manage the shifting actor landscape on the donor side.

These examples from country contexts at opposite ends of the spectrum — fragile states dependent on external support for stabilization at one end and well-performing states in which the significance of ODA as a source of financing and knowledge transfer is declining at the other — underscore that the analysis of the role of various governmental actors in bilateral cooperation must consider the variety of problem complexes that donors currently need to adapt aid management systems to. Although the issues of cross-governmental consistency and coordination arise in many different contexts, because actor constellations differ across problem complexes the future role of development agencies and foreign affairs ministries in these areas may also vary. In identifying the

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processes may not be considered '*career-enhancing*.' The desire to preserve bureaucratic autonomy focused around the fulfilment of a core mission is not only relevant in understanding bureaucratic competition, but also in considering processes of bureaucratic consolidation, as the absorption of additional competencies that lie outside traditional spheres of activity may be resisted by agencies that perceive an expanded agenda as a way of diluting their core mandate (Halperin / Clapp / Kanter 2006).

17 ODA phase-outs may also take place due to changes in the political situation in partner countries or due to political changes within donor countries that may for example result in a concentration of ODA resources in particular countries. The concentration of ODA may also follow from division of labour exercises designed to reduce the number of donors active in a particular country context.

contribution of diverse line ministries to bilateral cooperation, it is therefore useful to consider what specific competencies ministries bring in crafting responses to different types of development challenges.

### 3.3 Mobilizing sector-specific knowledge and new partnerships for development

The shifting issue agenda in development cooperation and the diversification of the character of country contexts in which bilateral cooperation programmes are implemented contribute to the growing heterogeneity of global development actors. The multiplication of actors in this field can be viewed positively, given their potential to provide additional financial resources or other forms of support and contribute policy ideas that offer partner countries a wider range of alternatives in considering how to foster their own development (Davies 2011; Zimmermann / Smith 2011). State development assistance providers beyond the DAC, private-aid providers, and recently created funding vehicles dedicated to narrow themes such as the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization (GAVI) are frequently cited as illustrations of the general trend toward actor proliferation in development. Although the higher visibility of a variety of development actors can be considered beneficial in terms of mobilizing resources and expanding choice among development partners, actor proliferation is also perceived to be taking place in a context where the institutions for managing cooperation among actors are either proliferating themselves (Davies 2011) or failing to adapt to new realities (Severino / Ray 2010).

The 4th High-Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness in Busan in 2011 emphasized the welcome contribution that a variety of public and private actors could make to advancing development goals and acknowledged that future efforts to promote international cooperation must have a more inclusive character than processes driven by the OECD's Development Assistance Committee. The underlying logic of the Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation that emerged from the High-Level Forum is that while participating actors may share general development objectives, they vary not only in their capacities to contribute to a common agenda but also in the nature of the strengths that they bring to the partnership. For this reason, the Global Partnership emphasizes the need to acknowledge the distinct roles that diverse actors are able to play and the importance of designing cooperation with the notion of exploiting comparative advantages clearly in mind (4th High-Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness 2011).

This basic objective of the Global Partnership – managing diversity by recognizing the complementary strengths of different actors – is a general objective underlying many types of partnerships. The Global Development Alliance conceived by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) in 2001 as an innovative vehicle to increase private resource mobilization for development provides an illustration of the partnership logic. The Global Development Alliance lists numerous resources that different types of actors can contribute to development initiatives. These resources include funding, specialized expertise, technological or intellectual property assets, business practices, an ability to influence policy, or access to new networks (USAID 2006).

This list of resources can be extended beyond the context of public-private partnerships to assess the potential for complementary engagement from many different types of ac-

tors, including governmental actors within the DAC. Three potential strengths of line ministries beyond development agencies can be highlighted in this context.<sup>18</sup> The first relates to their expertise. Expertise has commonly been considered a primary source of bureaucratic policy influence (Bendor / Taylor / van Gaalen 1985; Wilson 1989). Because of the focused character of their work within specific policy fields, bureaucracies generally have an informational advantage over governmental actors such as legislators, whose broad role in budgeting and policymaking limits specialization. Sector-specific bureaucracies may also have knowledge advantages in particular thematic areas in comparison to development bureaucracies, where available competencies cover a spectrum of sectors and where generalists may oversee the implementation of programmes and projects combining interventions across sectors.

The diverse thematic portfolios that development agencies manage may also be considered a source of specialized expertise, and an understanding of the interrelationship between dimensions of development including economic production, governance, social development, and environmental protection can be an asset in defining appropriate responses to development challenges in partner countries. Expertise can also relate to knowledge of specific countries or regions. Such expertise can be expected to be in greater supply in ministries with a larger presence in developing country contexts or larger personnel investments in geographical bureaus. One useful way of distinguishing development policy from other dimensions of external action is that the policy field pursues the goal of shaping the internal conditions of partner countries (Kloke-Lesch 1998). The locus of engagement is an important defining feature of development cooperation and the understanding of dynamics of change within varied country contexts should be an advantage that development bureaucracies possess in relation to other governmental actors.

A second potential strength concerns the differences in business practices that organizations adopt that can be a source of innovation in international cooperation. Examples of business practices that may be relevant in an international context include processes for managing procurement, reporting standards for implementing partners, and monitoring and evaluation practice to assess results. Business practices can influence how partner countries judge the value of cooperation programmes and the effectiveness of cooperation instruments. As an example, the practice of tying aid to procurement contracts with donor firms has limited the flexibility of partner countries to manage aid resources and reduced the overall value of aid transferred. Although aid tying has diminished over time within the OECD-DAC community, variations across the donor community and among agencies within individual donors persist, in part because of the association of tying with particular forms of assistance including infrastructure loans or food aid (Clay et al. 2008). Reporting standards can similarly restrict flexibility in how partner countries can make use of support and affect the nature of the administrative burden they carry. In assessing how three partner countries are managing a changing development finance landscape, Greenhill et al. (Greenhill / Prizzon / Rogerson 2013) note that stakeholders valued the speed of financing delivered by non-traditional development actors, a factor

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18 These potential strengths of organizations mentioned in a partnership development context overlap with commonly listed sources of bureaucratic influence in policy processes. Policy expertise, leadership and managerial effectiveness, the motivation of personnel, organisational cohesiveness, and support from external constituencies are highlighted in that context (Nicholson-Crotty / Miller 2012).

linked to the procedures that guide aid delivery. Finally, monitoring and evaluation practice reflects organizational efforts to assess how well they are achieving goals they have set and to learn from their experiences in order to improve implementation in the future.

A final possible contribution of bureaucratic pluralism relates to the embeddedness of sector-specific ministries in networks beyond the development policy community.<sup>19</sup> The engagement of bureaucracies with varied constituencies can be both a source of the interests that executive agencies defend and a source of power, as external support for an agency's work can strengthen its position in budgetary or policy processes (Wilson 1989). At the same time, networks including external constituencies can be a source for generating ideas about solutions to policy challenges or present opportunities for expanding development partnerships. The linkage of ministries to particular domestic constituencies can potentially expand the community of actors engaging on global issues and mobilize expertise from private sector entities or research communities that has not yet been fully tapped in development cooperation. Within partner countries, sector-specific ministries may also have the capacity to open access to actors such as counterparts in line ministries or multinational corporations operating in a specific sector.

This discussion of the potential strengths that different bureaucracies can bring to the policy processes addressing development issues does not imply a pre-existing judgment on the value or effectiveness of particular organizations in contributing to global development goals. Each of the potential strengths listed above carries a possible downside. Deep expertise within a specific field may limit bureaucratic players from acknowledging interdependencies across policy fields and compromising with other governmental actors to reach decisions that reflect the trade-offs between alternative priorities. Management structures and business practices within sector-specific ministries may not be more effective or efficient than the operating procedures of development ministries. The enlargement of networks of actors engaging on development issues may also expand the diversity of interests that are represented within international cooperation programmes, leading to a confusion of goals and questions about who the beneficiaries of these programmes are.

In sum, as the problem complexes and country contexts that development policy provides a response to shift, the palette of actors able to make a useful contribution to addressing development challenges may also change. Analysing the assets that different organizations possess therefore represents a valuable step in considering how diverse resources and capabilities can be effectively brought together in the future.

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19 Key constituencies within the development policy community include the non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that conduct advocacy on development issues and implement projects in developing countries on their own behalf and as partners of other aid providers, for-profit contractors that implement development projects, public implementing agencies, and research organizations that focus on global development issues.

## 4 Bureaucratic pluralism in international cooperation: a research agenda

The foregoing sections have outlined numerous issues that the global engagement of a variety of sector-specific ministries may present for the practice of development cooperation and the transformation of bilateral relations between donors and partner countries in more general terms. The paper has identified both potential positive contributions of bureaucracies through the mobilization of additional resources and expertise and possible negative consequences of their expanding role such as goal conflicts and coordination challenges as outgrowths of the engagement of sector-specific ministries in global development. To reach conclusions on what adjustments to donor action might be useful in light of the current bureaucratic landscape, it is necessary to move beyond this discussion of the potential role of various bureaucracies to examine their actual role. This section highlights key elements of a research agenda that can contribute to placing the discussion of bureaucratic pluralism in global development on a sounder empirical footing.

### 4.1 Descriptive assessment of the global role of bureaucracies

The analytical framework used in the DAC peer review process of the development cooperation programmes of individual donors offers a relevant reference point in examining the development role of sector-specific ministries. DAC peer reviews generally assess the overall strategic vision guiding donor ODA programmes, trends in the overall volume and geographical allocation of aid, the organizational set-up of aid, preferred aid implementation channels, and business practices within donor systems (OECD 2013a).

Although DAC peer reviews signal that domestically-oriented government departments have increased their global role across many donor contexts, there is little systematized evidence on trends in funding to sector-specific ministries over time. The depiction of trends through time can add to a picture of the current distribution of funding across ministries by indicating whether a noticeable change in the funding landscape is actually occurring and what the pace of this change appears to be. Collecting data on the scale of cooperation programmes in developing countries overseen by different ministries is a basic starting point for assessing the implications of their engagement on the transformation of development cooperation. While some of this will fall under an ODA label, international funding of sector-specific ministries may not be restricted to resources that qualify as ODA. Examples can include support related to military engagement in particular contexts, loans with a low level of concessionality, or cultural promotion programmes (OECD 2008c). Because non-ODA resources may also generate goal conflicts and coordination challenges in bilateral cooperation, it is useful to adopt an expansive view of funding to analyse the problems and opportunities that might arise from bureaucratic pluralism.

Beyond establishing the scale of the challenge that bureaucratic pluralism presents for development cooperation, a closer examination of funding trends should also highlight the priorities in international engagement from sector-specific ministries. To some degree, the broad priorities of these ministries should derive from their domestic mandates. By analysing the geographical allocation of funding from sector-specific ministries and what thematic issues are privileged, the potential for issue overlap and coordination challenges with other bureaucracies should become more apparent.



A final aspect of a descriptive overview of bureaucracies as global development actors relates to the way that they engage in international cooperation. On one level, this concerns the form of engagement, for example what the weight of technical or financial cooperation or shorter-term funding such as humanitarian assistance in their overall international portfolio is. On another level, this can refer to more specific channels of implementation that are favoured. Channels of implementation are linked to the nature of partners that ministries prefer to engage with. These may include other donor bureaucracies which serve as implementing partners, governmental actors in partner countries, or private actors at donor or partner-country levels. The selection of partners may also reflect the extent to which bilateral cooperation undertaken by sector-specific ministries is guided by aid effectiveness principles promoting the use of country systems in aid implementation and coordination with other aid providers. The assessment of preferred allocation channels across donor bureaucracies can reveal whether sector-specific ministries present any fundamental challenges to the development cooperation business models applied by development agencies or whether their engagement provides examples of innovations in how bilateral cooperation can be organized. A core question is whether their engagement reinforces the development cooperation programmes overseen by development agencies by promoting consistent interests and making use of similar pathways for implementation. If this does not occur, sector-specific ministries could contribute to fragmentation in the development cooperation landscape that could undermine the collective effectiveness of various forms of support provided by a single donor government.

#### 4.2 Sector-specific ministries within a bilateral international cooperation system

While presenting an overview of the funding trends, priorities, and preferred implementation channels of sector-specific ministries in international cooperation can be valuable in its own right, to understand the contribution of these ministries to the transformation of bilateral relations and the challenges that they present for development cooperation it is necessary to contextualize their role within a multi-actor system within donor countries that influences their range of action. Sector-specific ministries do not freely determine funding levels for international cooperation or define their mandate for global engagement in an entirely independent manner. Rather, they are dependent on legislative and executive authorities to define their parameters for action.<sup>20</sup> If issue overlaps or coordination deficits exist among ministries, this may reflect shortcomings in the character of cross-governmental institutions for ensuring a consistency of purpose, efficiency in the allocation of resources, and the harmonization of bureaucratic practice. It follows that the analysis of sector-specific ministries in international cooperation is incomplete without attention to the governmental mechanisms that establish policy guidance for international engagement and manage potential conflicts of interest across bureaucracies.

Governmental mechanisms to foster cooperation among ministries can have a hierarchical or horizontal character. Hierarchical coordination in global development can occur if the chief executive assumes responsibility for directing the activities of the spectrum of ministries providing technical assistance or disbursing funding in developing countries. Hierar-

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20 It can be expected that the degree of executive autonomy will vary among other reasons depending on the relationship between legislatures and the executive within a given political system.

chical coordination can alternatively take place through the designation of a government focal point to promote strategic coherence in international cooperation, a function that foreign affairs ministries could assume due to their primacy in managing bilateral relations. The issue of hierarchical coordination in the development arena is directly related to the role assigned to a specialized development cooperation bureaucracy within the foreign affairs apparatus. As noted above, there are variations across the donor community in how the lines of responsibility between foreign affairs and development bureaucracies are drawn. While development cooperation is subordinated to foreign affairs in many donor contexts, in select cases development bureaucracies may have the power to steer government policy toward developing countries and can play a coordinating role in relation to other ministries that engage in developing country contexts. The extent to which a development bureaucracy fulfils a leadership role within the bilateral cooperation system should influence how diverse ministries pursue cooperation that is consistent with the interests and practices of development bureaucracies.

The pursuit of consistent action among diverse actors in international cooperation does not necessarily depend on top-down coordination structures alone. Collaboration among government departments can also follow a horizontal logic. Horizontal collaboration can include joint planning or the joint implementation of specific programmes. As the discussion on joint-programming initiatives among donor governments suggests, joint planning can include a common analysis of the development challenges that funding should address and the determination of a strategy for the allocation of resources that avoids duplication and limits transaction costs for partner governments (Galeazzi / Helly / Krätke 2013). Horizontal collaboration may also take the form of information sharing. Information sharing across government agencies is a form of knowledge management, a concept generally associated with internal learning processes within individual organizations (Hovland 2003; Krohwinkel-Karlsson 2007). Although organizations such as development agencies face challenges in assessing the effectiveness of their own work and ensuring that best practice is diffused within the organization, the role of sector-specific ministries as global actors raises questions about how knowledge on effective development practice is transferred across ministerial lines. In the same vein, if the expertise that sector-specific ministries possess is considered a source of fresh approaches to dealing with global challenges, the channels for two-way knowledge transfer between development agencies and other bureaucratic players should also be examined in more detail.

In short, to assess the nature of the challenges that the distribution of responsibilities for international cooperation across a variety of ministries presents for donor governments, the character and functionality of mechanisms for cross-governmental coordination related to international cooperation requires further analysis. A key aspect of this kind of analysis is assessing the role played by foreign affairs and development bureaucracies in influencing the way that sector-specific ministries provide support in developing country contexts.

### 4.3 Country-level concerns

The general issues outlined above relating to the assessment of the profile of cooperation programmes overseen by sector-specific ministries and their relationship to other actors within a system of international cooperation also provide guidance for research at the partner-country level on the transformation of development cooperation. As Section 3 un-

derlined, the profile of development cooperation depends on the characteristics of the country contexts where various forms of support (technical, financial, or humanitarian assistance) are provided. In fragile states, for example, the role of security-oriented actors such as defence and law enforcement agencies can be expected to be more important. In partner countries experiencing an economic transition which are becoming ever less dependent on external funding in the form of official development assistance, governmental actors whose mandate focuses on the promotion of commercial interests can be expected to assume a more important role. In fragile contexts, the long-term survival of development assistance in a traditional form may be imaginable, while in transition economies development agencies might need to consider how to transfer their lessons learned to the governmental actors who will displace them in the future. The differences in key problem complexes across diverse country contexts can thus influence how the role of development agencies is defined in relation to other governmental actors engaging globally.

Across diverse country contexts, the exploration of bureaucratic pluralism can nevertheless be guided by common questions derived from the discussion of the portrait of bureaucratic engagement and the character of cross-governmental coordinating mechanisms above. In a first step, country-level research should establish a descriptive foundation by outlining the magnitude of resources managed by various bureaucracies, the thematic areas to which these resources are directed, and the channels for implementation that governmental actors prefer. As with descriptive analysis at a broader level, the purpose of raising these questions is to identify emerging priority areas in bilateral cooperation, to highlight potential for areas of overlap or goal conflicts among ministries, and to assess coordination needs within the cooperation system.

A second issue for country-level research concerns the way that the coherence of cross-governmental action is promoted. One dimension of coherence is the existence and character of a strategy for cooperation with a given country that has incorporated input from the diverse ministries with country-level representation and provides guidance for all actors engaged in a specific country context. Country strategies should provide a tool for aligning donor contributions with the development priorities of the partner government and a basis for identifying complementary areas of investment with other donors in addition to offering guidance on how to effectively bring together contributions from governmental entities from a single donor government. A unified strategy for engagement should make clear what the priorities for bilateral engagement are and how the efforts of different governmental actors are designed to complement one another in addressing key goals.

The examination of the role of embassies in managing the engagement of diverse bureaucracies is an extension of the analysis of the strategic coherence of governmental action. Over time, the OECD-DAC community has encouraged decentralization of development cooperation decision-making to country-level missions in order to improve the responsiveness of aid initiatives to local challenges (OECD 2008a). Although diplomatic representations could be expected to be a focal point for all ministries engaging in international cooperation in a given country context, in practice externally-oriented ministries may act primarily in accordance with the objectives of their headquarters, and funding priorities, implementation channels, and disbursement practices may thus vary across bureaucracies. If varied donor bureaucracies operate in a relatively autonomous manner at the country-level, this may reinforce challenges related to fragmentation in aid management within partner-country governments. In partner-country contexts where line ministries assume

greater responsibility in negotiating with the various donors wishing to provide funding to specific sectors, the overall leverage of the central government vis-à-vis aid providers may diminish (Whitfield 2009). While the engagement of donor sector-specific ministries with counterparts in partner countries might carry advantages in enabling knowledge transfer, the diffusion of engagement could also undermine coherence within partner-country governments in implementing national development programmes. The extent of intra-governmental coordination through an embassy may therefore not only have consequences for the consistency of donor action and the capacity of a single donor to coordinate with other external actors, but for the ability of donor governments to effectively support partner-country efforts to manage development processes.

Coordination with other actors is only one aspect of enhancing the effectiveness of development cooperation programmes. In examining the country-level contributions of sector-specific ministries to development, it is also relevant to analyse the management practices that govern how bureaucracies engage with partners and how they assess the achievements of their investments.

## 5 Conclusions

This paper has considered bureaucratic pluralism in development cooperation – the internationalization of the work of a diverse spectrum of ministries – to represent one manifestation of the broader phenomenon of actor proliferation in global development, that is, one dimension of the transformation of ODA as a policy field. To inform the assessment of the scale and character of this transformation, the paper underlines the need to establish a stronger empirical foundation on the global engagement of ministries beyond the foreign affairs and development bureaucracies that continue to dominate the development cooperation landscape. Empirical work on this topic can proceed on three levels: 1) mapping the state of development cooperation programmes funded by diverse ministries to assess the potential for issue overlap and goal conflicts among ministries; 2) identifying the organizational structures in which external action is embedded to assess the capacity of governmental institutions to manage pluralism; 3) assessing the character of bureaucratic engagement and the consistency of support from individual donors at the country level. The examination of these aspects of ministerial engagement should contribute to discussions on how donors can effectively organize international cooperation in the future to reconcile the interests of diverse governmental actors with the interests of bilateral partners.

The reference point for this paper is clearly the ODA policy field and the norms of aid and development effectiveness that are associated with it. On one level, the study of this topic is oriented toward understanding the reach of donor commitments to implementing the aid and development effectiveness agenda across the spectrum of governmental engagement in developing country contexts. However, the goal of this undertaking is not simply to assess the consistency of the approaches of ministries beyond development agencies with the aid and development effectiveness agenda, but also to identify the potential strengths of these actors and the issues that are relevant in defining the role of diverse ministries in development cooperation in the future. An underlying assumption of the analysis is that the diversification of the actor landscape in development cooperation can add value to efforts to respond to development challenges. Because these challenges remain vast in scope, there may not only be room for a variety of actors to contribute but also a need to

attract their political, financial, and knowledge resources to the development enterprise to a greater degree. Making use of these possible strengths and limiting the known disadvantages associated with donor fragmentation requires attention to how the development cooperation systems in which diverse contributions are embedded are organized and what practices enable the complementary deployment of these resources.

As the discussion in the first chapter of this paper highlighted, the participation of sector-specific ministries in development cooperation is not a new phenomenon. Still, the involvement of diverse governmental entities in donor countries in guiding and implementing cooperation programmes has received limited scrutiny. While the scale of their participation in development cooperation may justify a focus on other potential sources of inefficiency or ineffectiveness within donor systems, their engagement nevertheless raises fundamental questions about how to characterize the ODA policy field and how it is adjusting to changing country contexts and issue agendas. In particular, the linkage of bureaucratic agendas with national interests in specific sectors highlights a transparent interest orientation in donor engagement that implies a need to reflect on how cooperation programmes justified on the basis of mutual interests can also generate mutually beneficial outcomes.



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