International Journal of Scientific Research and Management (IJSRM)
||Volume||13||Issue||09||Pages||9700-9717||2025||
Website: https://ijsrm.net ISSN (e): 2321-3418
DOI: 10.18535/ijsrm/v13i09.em06

Bridges or Chains? The Growing Footprint of Chinese FDI in Africa

Fana Wouani Assen Lloyde Quatrid[1], Andreas Helena Tulela[2]

[1] School of economics, Zhejiang Gongshang University, 310018,
[2] School of tourism and urban rural planning, Zhejiang Gongshang University, 310018,
***Corresponding Author:**
Andreas Helena Tulela [2] , School of tourism and urban rural planning, Zhejiang Gongshang University Hangzhou, China， 310018.

Abstract
This study critically examines the evolution, motivations, and economic impacts of Chinese Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in Africa, exploring whether it serves as a bridge to sustainable development or a chain of dependency. Drawing on empirical data and case studies, the paper traces the historical trajectory of Chinese FDI, identifies key economic, policy, and geopolitical drivers, and evaluates sectoral and country-specific trends. It highlights the positive contributions of Chinese FDI to GDP growth, job creation, technology transfer, and infrastructure development while also addressing concerns related to resource exploitation, debt sustainability, neocolonial influence, and competition with local enterprises. The study emphasizes the importance of strengthening institutional capacity and enhancing local linkages to fully leverage Chinese investments. Future policy directions are discussed, with a focus on emerging sectors such as renewable energy, the digital economy, and agro-processing. The paper concludes with strategic recommendations for African governments to align Chinese FDI with national development goals and maximize its developmental impact.

Keywords: Chinese foreign direct investment, Africa-China relations, debt sustainability, infrastructure development, economic impact

1 Introduction

In 2023, China became Africa’s largest bilateral trading partner for the 15th consecutive year, with bilateral trade reaching a record US$282.1 billion, up 1.5% from 2022 (Nyabiage, 2024; Xinhua, 2024). This surge reflects a profound realignment of Africa’s external partnerships and underscores China’s emergence as a central player in the continent’s development trajectory (Brazys & Jung, 2024). More so, over the past two decades, China-Africa economic ties have evolved from a niche relationship into one of global consequence. In 2000, total trade stood at approximately US$11.67 billion, and by 2023, it had increased more than twentyfold (Oyintarelado, 2024). Chinese foreign direct investment (FDI) flows to Africa rose from US$75 million in 2003 to US$3.96 billion in 2023 (China Africa Research Initiative, 2024), see Figure 1.

According to the World Economic Forum (2024)The inflows of Chinese FDIs to Africa peaked at US$5 billion in 2022, representing 4.4% of the region’s total FDI. These investments support a growing network of Chinese-financed projects across sectors such as transportation, energy, mining, telecommunications, manufacturing, and agribusiness. Notably, China has also emerged as Africa’s largest bilateral lender, accounting for about 17% of sub-Saharan Africa’s external public debt by 2021, up from less than 2% in 2005 (International Monetary Fund, 2023). This lending has been instrumental in financing infrastructure development, although concerns about debt sustainability have grown in recent years (Business Insider Africa, 2025; Mutai, 2025).

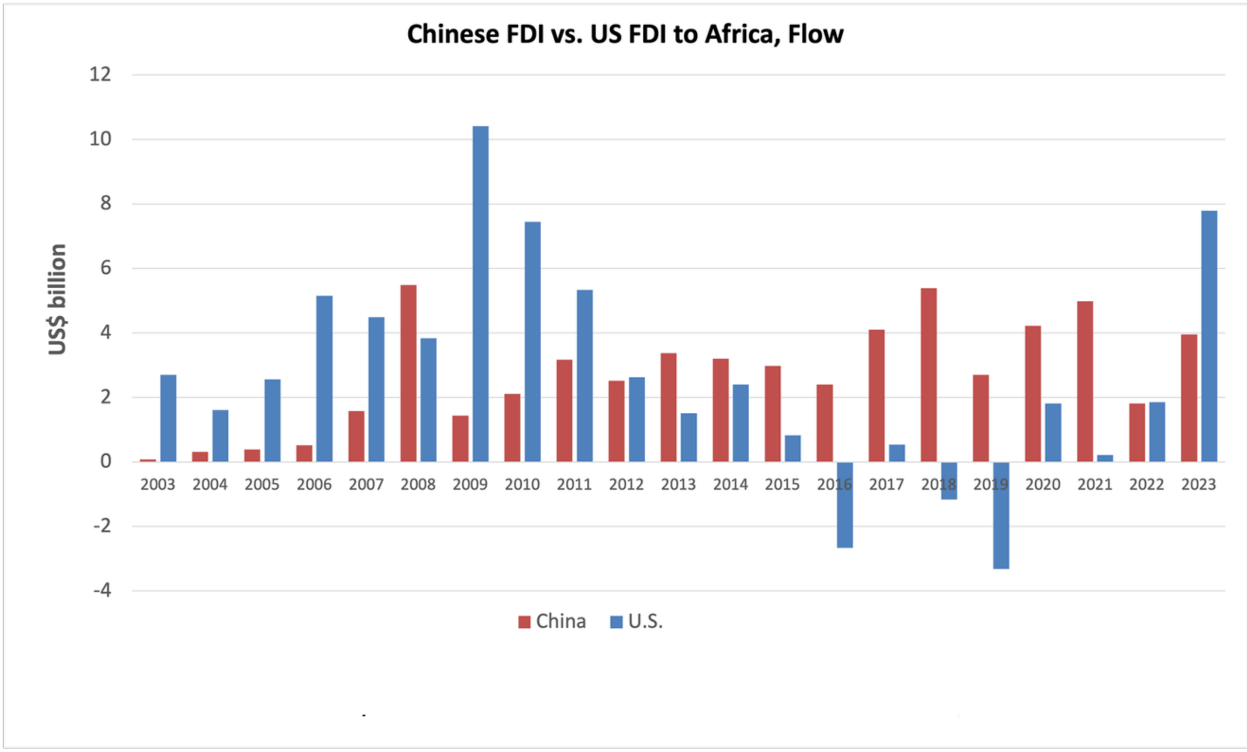

Figure 1 Chinese vs. USA foreign direct investment flow into Africa.

Source: The Ministry of Commerce of China, U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis

Furthermore, the scale, growth, and strategic depth of China's economic engagement in Africa are reshaping the continent's infrastructure, industrial capacity, and geopolitical orientation (Utesch-Xiong & Kambhampati, 2022; Yanne Sylvaire et al., 2022). High-speed rail lines in Kenya, hydroelectric dams in Ethiopia, copper mines in Zambia, and smart cities in Egypt bear the hallmark of Chinese engineering and investment (Yuan & Ji, 2025). Under the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), launched in 2013, China has actively promoted infrastructure connectivity and economic corridors across the continent (World Economic Forum, 2024). These efforts are increasingly intersecting with Africa's own ambitions under the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), which seeks to unify a market of 1.7 billion people and a combined GDP of over US$6 trillion by 2030 (World Economic Forum, 2024). For many African governments, Chinese capital offers not just funding but a developmental model, one that emphasizes state-led investment, infrastructure-first growth, and pragmatic bilateralism (Michael et al., 2021; Yanne Sylvaire et al., 2022).

Importantly, this growing footprint also raises critical questions. Is Chinese FDI acting as a bridge to sustainable development or a chain of dependency? Are African economies gaining technological capabilities and industrial depth, or are they being locked into low-value extractive roles? And how do issues of governance, labor standards, and debt sustainability factor into the long-term balance of this relationship? This article critically examines the rising tide of Chinese FDI in Africa. It explores the motivations behind China's investment strategy, the sectoral composition of its capital flows, and the economic, political, and institutional impacts on African countries. It also assesses the implications for Africa's development policy, industrialization goals, and strategic autonomy in a rapidly shifting global order. Through this lens, we ask: Are these investments building bridges toward mutual prosperity, or forging new chains of asymmetry and dependence?

2 Historical Overview of Chinese FDI in Africa

China's engagement with Africa dates back centuries, with early trade and diplomatic exchanges during the Tang and Ming dynasties. However, modern economic relations began in earnest after the Bandung Conference in 1955, where China positioned itself as a partner to newly independent African states (Gagne, 2018). During the Cold War, China provided aid and technical assistance to African countries, often motivated by ideological solidarity and diplomatic recognition (Gagne, 2018). The most emblematic case in the 1970s is when China financed major infrastructure projects such as the Tanzania-Zambia Railway (TAZARA), signaling its commitment to Africa's development (Rahman, 2024). This period saw little to no formal FDI as China itself remained closed to global capital flows.

Following Deng Xiaoping's economic reforms and China's "Open Door Policy" in 1978, the 1980s and 1990s marked another phase of engagement in Africa. Chinese state-owned enterprises (SOEs) began operating in Africa, though primarily through construction contracts funded by Chinese foreign aid, export credits, and multilateral donors (Suresh, 2022). These projects included the construction of stadiums, hospitals, government buildings, and roads. However, FDI, defined as equity investment by Chinese firms into African-based operations, remained minimal (Brazys & Jung, 2024; Darko & Kangning, 2022). Chinese companies operated more as contractors than as direct investors, reflecting tight capital controls and limited institutional support for outward investment at the time (Michael et al., 2021).

The turning point came with the launch of China's "Going Global" strategy in 2000, which encouraged enterprises to seek international markets and investment opportunities. This coincided with the establishment of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC), which formalized bilateral ties and laid a foundation for sustained Chinese investment across the continent (Ibonye, 2022; Suresh, 2022). Data from China's Ministry of Commerce (MOFCOM) shows that Chinese FDI in Africa surged from $75 million in 2003 to $43.4 billion in 2017 (China Africa Research Initiative, 2024). This exponential growth reflected China's strategic pursuit of natural resources, market expansion, and geopolitical influence. According to the China Africa Research Initiative (CARI), Chinese FDI flows peaked at $5.5 billion in 2008, bolstered by major deals such as ICBC's acquisition of a stake in Standard Bank South Africa (China Africa Research Initiative, 2024). In more recent years, including 2023, total FDI flows reached $3.96 billion. Countries like Niger, South Africa, Angola, Morocco, and the Republic of Congo have emerged as top investment destinations, reflecting both strategic interests and growing economic opportunities (Oladipupo & Ajide, 2024; Utesch-Xiong & Kambhampati, 2022).

The composition of Chinese FDI in Africa has historically been skewed toward the extractive and construction sectors. Studies such as Atitianti & Asiamah (2023) and Nyabiage (2024) show that Chinese SOEs initially focused on oil, gas, and mineral extraction in resource-rich countries like Angola, Nigeria, Sudan, and Zambia. Concurrently, large-scale infrastructure projects, roads, ports, dams, were executed by major Chinese construction firms, often financed through loans from the Export-Import Bank of China and implemented under "resources-for-infrastructure" arrangements (Brazys & Jung, 2024). For instance, Angola received billions in infrastructure financing repaid through oil shipments, a model that became widely adopted across sub-Saharan Africa. However, the sectoral distribution has diversified over time (Michael et al., 2021). By the mid-2010s, sectors such as manufacturing, telecommunications, real estate, and services began attracting Chinese investment. In Ethiopia, Chinese firms led investment in textile and leather manufacturing, supported by state-driven industrial parks (Yiblet, 2024). Similarly, in Kenya and Nigeria, Chinese telecom giants like Huawei and ZTE became integral to digital infrastructure development. According to a study by the China Africa Research Initiative (CARI) at Johns Hopkins University, by 2015, nearly 13% of Chinese FDI stock in Africa was in manufacturing, a share expected to have grown further by 2020 (China Africa Research Initiative, 2024). Geographically, Chinese FDI in Africa has been heavily concentrated in a few countries. According to MOFCOM and UNCTAD data, South Africa, Nigeria, Angola, Kenya, and Ethiopia have consistently ranked among the top recipients (Miao et al., 2020). A 2014 study by the OECD found that six countries accounted for more than 50% of Chinese FDI stock in Africa. The dominance of resource-rich states such as DR Congo and Sudan reflects China's strategic interest in energy and minerals, while growing investments in countries like Ethiopia underscore Beijing's shifting focus toward export-oriented manufacturing and infrastructure (Angessa et al., 2022).

Scholars identify four primary motivations behind China's FDI in Africa. First is resource acquisition, driven by the need to secure energy and raw materials to sustain China's industrial growth (Yanne Sylvaire et al., 2022). Second is market expansion, as Africa's burgeoning middle class presents new opportunities for Chinese goods and services (Utesch-Xiong & Kambhampati, 2022). Third is diplomatic influence, FDI is used as a tool to strengthen bilateral relationships and secure support in international forums (Atitianti & Asiamah, 2023). Finally, strategic positioning plays a role, particularly through infrastructure investments that support China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) (Abdulsalam et al., 2021). Contrary to Western narratives that depict these investments as tools of statecraft, Darko & Kangning (2022) argues that the majority are profit-oriented, driven by commercial incentives rather than foreign policy mandates.

Numerous empirical studies have attempted to assess the determinants of Chinese FDI in Africa. Munjal et al. (2022) found that Chinese investment was driven primarily by market size and natural resource availability. Tasinda et al. (2021), using panel data econometrics, argued that Chinese FDI was less sensitive to institutional quality than Western FDI, making it more likely to flow into countries with weaker governance structures. This pattern, however, has begun to shift. Research by Miao et al. (2020) and Atitianti & Asiamah (2023) note that more recent Chinese investments, particularly those in light manufacturing and telecommunications, are increasingly responsive to factors such as policy stability, logistics infrastructure, and local market access. Also, the question of developmental impact remains heavily debated. Several studies document positive macroeconomic effects, such as increased employment, infrastructure quality, and access to capital. For instance, a study by Yuan & Ji (2025) conclude that FDI can have a meaningful impact on growth, but only when host institutions meet a certain quality threshold. Conversely, other scholars argue that the benefits of Chinese FDI are often overstated, especially where projects are implemented without sufficient local linkages or skills transfer (Atitianti & Asiamah, 2023). The African Development Bank (AfDB, 2020) warns that while Chinese FDI has filled critical infrastructure gaps, it has not uniformly contributed to industrial upgrading or technological spillovers.

Table 1 Key Phases of Chinese FDI in Africa

Phase	Time Period	Annual FDI Flows	Target Sectors	Major Countries	Key Drivers
Initial Engagement	1980s–1999	Minimal (pre-2000)	Construction (stadiums, hospitals, roads), funded by aid and export credits	Zambia, Tanzania, Sudan	Political solidarity, aid diplomacy, limited capital controls
Going Global Strategy	2000–2007	$75M (2003); $1.6B (2007)	Infrastructure, mining, telecom	Angola, Sudan, Ethiopia	Launch of “Going Global” strategy; FOCAC; resource-seeking
Peak Expansion	2008–2013	$5.5B (2008 peak); $2–4B annually	Banking, mining, energy, construction	South Africa, Nigeria, DRC, Zambia	ICBC–Standard Bank deal; commodity boom; strategic partnerships
Belt and Road Integration	2013–2019	$3–4B annually	Transport, energy, ICT, manufacturing	Kenya, Ethiopia, Egypt, Angola	Belt and Road Initiative; infrastructure diplomacy; market expansion
Post-COVID Recalibration	2020–2023	$3.96B (2023)	Agriculture, light manufacturing, services, green energy	Niger, Morocco, Republic of Congo, South Africa	Diversification; debt sustainability; energy transition; geopolitical influence

Moreover, there is a documented gap between announced and realized Chinese investments. According to Brautigam (2020), only a fraction of publicized Chinese investment pledges are fully executed. This discrepancy is due to several factors, including bureaucratic bottlenecks in host countries, global commodity price volatility, and risk reassessment by Chinese firms. For example, planned mining investments in Guinea and Zimbabwe were either scaled down or indefinitely postponed due to governance concerns and logistical hurdles. It is also important to consider the role of financial institutions such as the China-Africa Development Fund (CAD Fund), established in 2007 with an initial capital of US$5 billion (later expanded to $10 billion) (United Nations Industrial Development Organization, 2024). The Fund has provided equity finance for hundreds of projects in infrastructure, agriculture, and industrial zones. In Ethiopia’s Eastern Industrial Park and Egypt’s Suez Economic Zone, for instance, CAD Fund financing has played a catalytic role in attracting Chinese SMEs to establish production bases tailored for African and third-party markets (Giannecchini & Taylor, 2018).

2.1 Africa FDI needs and gaps

Foreign direct investment is widely recognized as a vital driver of economic development in Africa, particularly in bridging financing and resource gaps that constrain growth. A number of current academic studies emphasize Africa's pressing need for investment in critical sectors such as infrastructure, energy, skills development, and technology (Abdulsalam et al., 2021; Munjal et al., 2022). These needs arise from pervasive issues like limited domestic savings, low productivity, and insufficient integration into global value chains (Utesch-Xiong & Kambhampati, 2022). However, while the continent's potential to attract FDI remains high, many countries face persistent gaps that discourage long-term investment, namely weak institutions, macroeconomic instability, and low absorptive capacity for the benefits that FDI can bring (Yanne Sylvaire et al., 2022; Yuan & Ji, 2025). Several empirical studies underscore that even when FDI arrives, its impact is uneven unless complementary reforms in governance, education, and infrastructure are in place (Adegboye & Okorie, 2023). The table below synthesizes key findings from recent literature, highlighting Africa's FDI needs, associated challenges, and references to published academic research.

Table 2 Africa's FDI Needs and Gaps

Category	FDI Need	Gap/Challenge	Reference
Infrastructure	Capital for roads, energy, logistics	Poor transport, unreliable power, digital divide	(Adegboye et al., 2020; Rathnayake et al., 2023)
Human Capital	Skills transfer, training programs	Low education levels, brain drain	(Adegboye et al., 2020)
Technology	Access to advanced production methods	Weak R&D, limited tech adoption	(Rathnayake et al., 2023)
Market Integration	Entry into global supply chains	Trade barriers, fragmented markets	(Adegboye & Okorie, 2023)
Institutional Quality	Stable governance, legal frameworks	Corruption, policy inconsistency	(Adegboye & Okorie, 2023; Adelakun & Ogujiuba, 2023)
Macroeconomic Stability	Predictable inflation, currency stability	Volatility, debt burdens	(Adelakun & Ogujiuba, 2023; Rathnayake et al., 2023)
Absorptive Capacity	Ability to benefit from FDI spillovers	Weak institutions, low innovation	(Tasinda et al., 2021)

3 Key Determinants of Chinese FDI in Africa

3.1 Economic Factors

Economic factors have consistently played a central role in driving Chinese foreign direct investment (FDI) in Africa. One of the most prominent determinants is natural resource availability, particularly oil, gas, and minerals (Utesch-Xiong & Kambhampati, 2022). Scholars have noted that China's growing energy demands have led it to secure access to natural resources across the continent. Countries such as Angola, Nigeria, and Sudan rich in oil and other minerals, have received significant inflows of Chinese FDI (Adegboye & Okorie, 2023; Tasinda et al., 2021). According to Sylvaire et al. (2022), resource-seeking behavior remains a core motivation for China's economic engagement in Africa, especially in sectors like mining and energy. Notably, market size and growth potential are also vital economic determinants. Larger African economies with expanding consumer markets, such as South Africa, Egypt, and Kenya, tend to attract more diversified Chinese investments beyond natural resources, including in manufacturing, services, and infrastructure (Wang et al., 2022). Abdulsalam et al. (2021) emphasize that China's investment strategy increasingly targets emerging markets with potential for long-term economic growth, enabling Chinese firms to access new markets and diversify revenue streams.

Another key factor is infrastructure development opportunities. Many African nations face infrastructural deficits, creating a demand that aligns with China's capacity and strategic interest in exporting its industrial overcapacity and construction expertise (Oladipupo & Ajide, 2024). Chinese firms, often supported by concessional loans and diplomatic ties, have been active in building roads, railways, ports, and telecommunications networks (Atitianti & Asiamah, 2023; Darko & Kangning, 2022). This infrastructural engagement often comes bundled with FDI in sectors such as logistics and industrial parks. According to the World Bank (2016), China's comparative advantage in large-scale infrastructure projects gives it a unique edge in Africa's investment landscape. Moreover, labor costs also influence Chinese FDI decisions. While not as significant as resource and market considerations, lower wages in some African countries can make them attractive destinations for labor-intensive industries (Darko & Kangning, 2022). Giannecchini & Taylor (2018) document cases where Chinese firms, particularly in Ethiopia and Zambia, have established manufacturing operations to take advantage of lower production costs relative to China. Additionally, macroeconomic stability and policy environment matter. Countries that have adopted liberal investment regimes, maintained stable exchange rates, and provided investment incentives have been more successful in attracting Chinese capital (Atitianti & Asiamah, 2023; Gagne, 2018). Alden and Davies (2006) argue that although political alignment with China can facilitate entry, sound economic management remains crucial for sustaining FDI flows.

3.2 Policy Drivers

Policy drivers have significantly shaped the trajectory and intensity of Chinese FDI in Africa. Unlike many traditional investors, China's FDI is often strongly aligned with state-led policy frameworks that encourage strategic international expansion. The "Go Global" (or "Going Out") strategy, introduced in the late 1990s, is one of the most influential policy initiatives in this context (Suresh, 2022). This strategy aimed to promote the internationalization of Chinese enterprises through financial incentives, diplomatic support, and simplified approval processes. It provided Chinese companies with the political backing and financial tools to explore markets such as Africa, which were traditionally viewed as risky or underdeveloped by Western investors (Saliou Kokouma & Xu, 2013).

Another major policy driver is the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), launched in 2013. Africa, while not originally central to the BRI, has become an increasingly important component due to its strategic location and development needs (Rahman, 2022). The BRI has facilitated Chinese investment in large-scale infrastructure and logistics corridors across the continent, particularly in countries with major ports or transit potential, such as Djibouti, Kenya, and Egypt (Komakech & Ombati, 2023; Lisinge, 2020). According to Komakech & Ombati (2023), the BRI serves as both an economic and diplomatic tool, allowing China to deepen bilateral ties while enabling companies to invest in energy, transport, and construction sectors. Furthermore, bilateral agreements and strategic partnerships have also played a critical role in facilitating Chinese FDI. The Forum on China–Africa Cooperation (FOCAC), established in 2000, has provided a diplomatic platform for economic cooperation and policy coordination (Ibonye, 2022). Through FOCAC, China has announced multi-billion-dollar investment pledges, debt forgiveness programs, and concessional loans (King, 2025). These agreements often include provisions that open up investment opportunities for Chinese enterprises, particularly state-owned enterprises (SOEs), in areas aligned with recipient countries' development priorities (Cheng et al., 2023).

In addition, Chinese FDI is also guided by the state's industrial and foreign aid policies, which blur the line between commercial and political motives. Chinese development finance often complements FDI projects, especially in infrastructure (Lisinge, 2020). For instance, loans from the China Exim Bank or China Development Bank are frequently tied to construction projects executed by Chinese firms, creating a policy-facilitated investment environment (Adegboye et al., 2020; Tasinda et al., 2021). These arrangements reflect a "package deal" approach, where aid, trade, and investment are bundled for mutual strategic benefit. More so, China's domestic overcapacity in industries such as steel, cement, and construction has motivated policy-driven overseas investment (Adegboye & Okorie, 2023). African countries, with their infrastructural deficits, offer an outlet for China to export its surplus capacity while securing long-term economic influence. This policy direction is supported by provincial governments in China, which encourage local enterprises to invest abroad as a means of maintaining industrial activity and employment (Cheng et al., 2023).

3.3 Geopolitical Motivations

Geopolitical motivations form a critical layer of understanding behind China's FDI in Africa. Unlike purely market- or resource-driven investment patterns, Chinese FDI is often guided by broader strategic objectives that aim to enhance China's global influence, secure political alliances, and counterbalance Western dominance (Wang et al., 2022), particularly in the Global South (Cheng et al., 2023). Africa has become a key geopolitical theatre in which China seeks to project soft power and secure long-term strategic advantages. One of the primary geopolitical motivations is China's pursuit of diplomatic support and international legitimacy. Many African countries have historically voted as a bloc in international forums such as the United Nations. By cultivating economic ties through FDI, aid, and concessional loans, China builds political goodwill and secures African votes in support of its positions on global issues, including human rights and trade policies (Abate & Brunn, 1977). Abdessultane et al. (2025) notes that China "non-interference" principle is particularly attractive to African governments, which often perceive Western investment as conditional and politically intrusive. More so, competition with Western powers and influence-building is another core motivation. As the United States and European Union maintain strong historical and economic links with Africa, China's rising presence through FDI enables it to establish a counterweight to Western influence (Rathnayake et al., 2023). By investing in countries often overlooked or sanctioned by the West, such as Zimbabwe, Sudan, or the Democratic Republic of the Congo, China not only gains access to resources but also strengthens bilateral relationships that expand its geopolitical reach (Utesch-Xiong & Kambhampati, 2022).

China's military and security interests have also shaped some aspects of its investment strategy. While FDI is largely economic in form, certain investments, especially in critical infrastructure like ports, telecommunications, and railways, have dual-use potential that can serve strategic and defense purposes (Lawal et al., 2025). For example, the Chinese-funded port in Djibouti is situated near China's only overseas military base, highlighting the intersection between commercial investment and geopolitical positioning (Pintér, 2022). These strategic assets enhance China's ability to protect shipping lanes and exert influence along key maritime routes under the broader Belt and Road Initiative. Another motivation lies in enhancing China's South–South cooperation and leadership. Through FDI and development finance, China positions itself as a champion of the developing world, promoting an alternative model of development based on mutual benefit and non-conditional engagement (Adelakun & Ogujiuba, 2023; Rahman, 2024). This fosters a geopolitical narrative of China as a partner rather than a patron, which resonates with many African states seeking alternatives to traditional Western aid models. According to Miao et al. (2020), this ideological framing allows China to deepen diplomatic ties while presenting its global rise as beneficial to other emerging regions.

4 Provision of Credits to African Economies by China

Since the early 2000s, Africa's public debt, encompassing both domestic and external obligations, has grown significantly. This trend accelerated in recent years, especially due to expanded government spending during the COVID-19 pandemic (Brautigam, 2020; Mutai, 2025). By 2022, China's portion of Africa's external debt had increased markedly, rising from just 1% in 2000 to around 13%. This growth is largely attributed to China's extensive infrastructure financing across the continent. The countries with the largest debt exposures to China include Angola (approximately $21 billion), followed by Ethiopia ($6.8 billion), Kenya ($6.7 billion), Zambia ($5.7 billion), Egypt ($5.2 billion), Nigeria ($4.3 billion), Côte d'Ivoire ($3.9 billion), Cameroon ($3.8 billion), South Africa ($3.4 billion), and the Republic of Congo ($3.4 billion) (Boston University Global Development Policy Center, 2024).

In response to rising concerns over debt sustainability, China has tended to focus on restructuring debt and waiving interest-free loan obligations, rather than providing broad-based debt cancellation (Oyintarelado, 2024). Nevertheless, China's lending alone does not fully account for Africa's elevated debt-to-GDP ratios. Other significant creditors include private bondholders, as well as multilateral and bilateral institutions such as the World Bank, the African Development Bank (AfDB), and the French government. In fact, by 2022, these combined sources accounted for roughly 65% of the continent's external debt (Oyintarelado, 2024). Currently, the burden of existing debt and the high cost of new borrowing present challenges for African countries seeking additional financing. This creates an opportunity to shift toward more concessional financing arrangements and to expand foreign direct investment (FDI) as a more sustainable alternative to debt-heavy development strategies (Business Insider Africa, 2025).

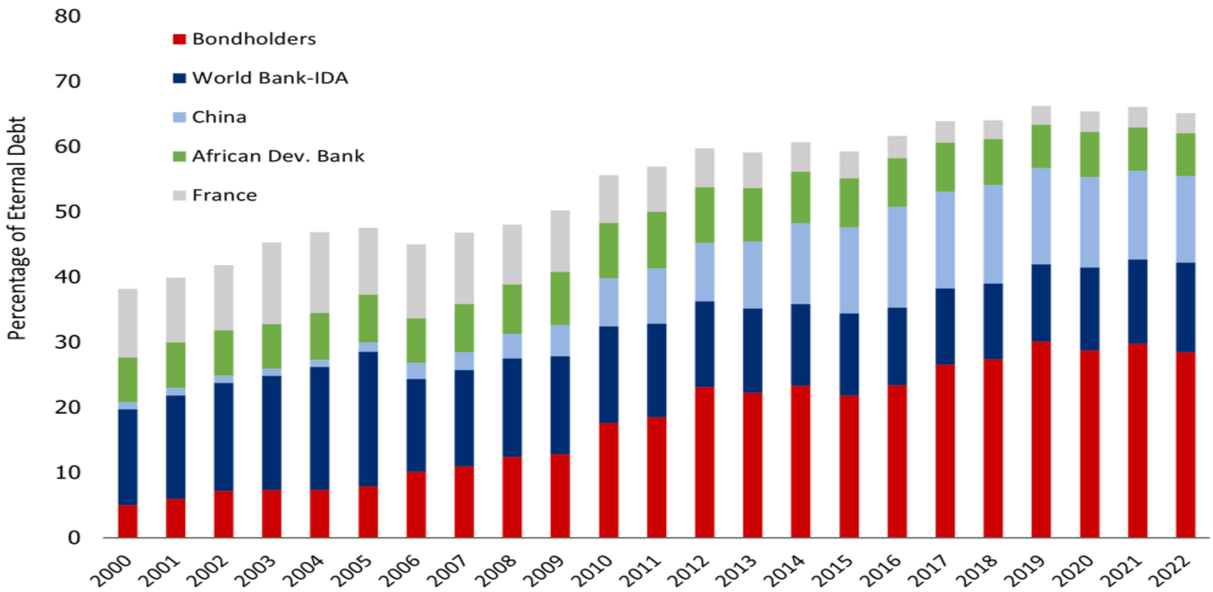

Figure 2 Top Five Creditors to African Economies from 2000 - 2022

Source: Oyintarelado (2024), with data source from the Boston University Global Development Policy Center (2024).

From 2000 to 2022, sovereign borrowers across Africa received an estimated $170.08 billion in loan commitments from Chinese lenders. Of this total, approximately $134.01 billion came from China's two main development finance institutions, the Export-Import Bank of China (CHEXIM) and the China Development Bank (CDB), which played a dominant role in funding major projects across the continent. Although China has become Africa's largest bilateral lender through extensive sovereign loan financing, the volume of new lending has been on a consistent downward trend since reaching its highest level in 2016. Mounting debt pressures and the rising expense of securing new loans have significantly limited the capacity of many African nations to absorb further debt (Global Development Policy Center, 2024).

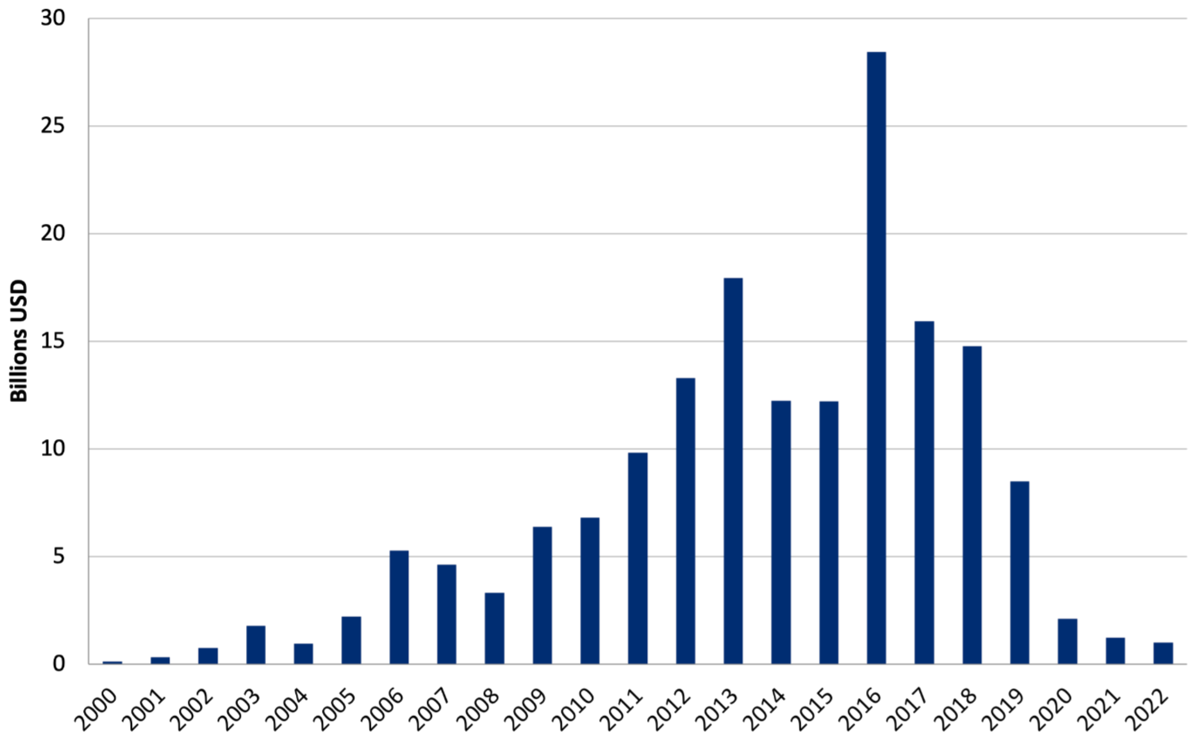

Figure 3 Chinese Loans to Africa from 2000 to 2022

Source: Global Development Policy Center (2024)

While Angola and Kenya have recently come close to defaulting, both nations have managed to stabilize their debt situations and appear positioned to refinance their obligations in the near term. In contrast, three

African countries, Zambia, Ghana, and Ethiopia, have entered into default within the past three years. Notably, all three rank among the largest African recipients of Chinese loans, underscoring the complex financial risks tied to high external borrowing from bilateral creditors like China.

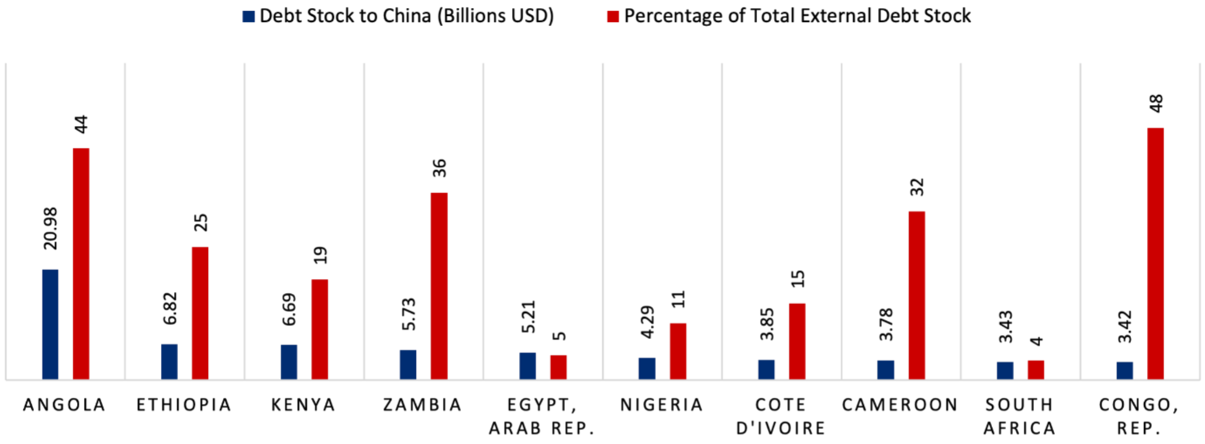

Figure 4 Top Ten African Countries' Debt Stock to China in 2022

Source: Boston University Global Development Policy Center and African Economic Research Consortium (2024).

5 Sectoral Distribution of Chinese FDI in Africa and Case Studies

The composition of Chinese foreign direct investment (FDI) in Africa has undergone significant transformation since the late 1970s. In the early stages, particularly between 1979 and 2000, China's investment was primarily directed toward the manufacturing sector, which absorbed nearly 46% of total FDI flows during that period. The natural resources sector came next, accounting for about 28%, followed by services (18%) and agriculture (7%), according to OECD data (Global Development Policy Center, 2024). However, the landscape shifted notably in the early 2000s. Between 2001 and 2008, investment flows became heavily concentrated in extractive industries, reflecting China's increasing demand for raw materials. In the years that followed, particularly up to 2017, there was a marked pivot toward construction and infrastructure, coinciding with the expansion of China's Belt and Road Initiative and its deepening involvement in Africa's development needs (Adegboye & Okorie, 2023). By the end of 2017, the stock of Chinese FDI in Africa showed a clear dominance in infrastructure-related sectors. Construction and infrastructure projects made up approximately $12.9 billion, representing 30% of the total FDI stock. This was followed by mining, which accounted for $9.8 billion (22%), financial services at $6.1 billion (14%), and manufacturing with $5.7 billion (13%) (Zhang, 2022). See Figure 5.

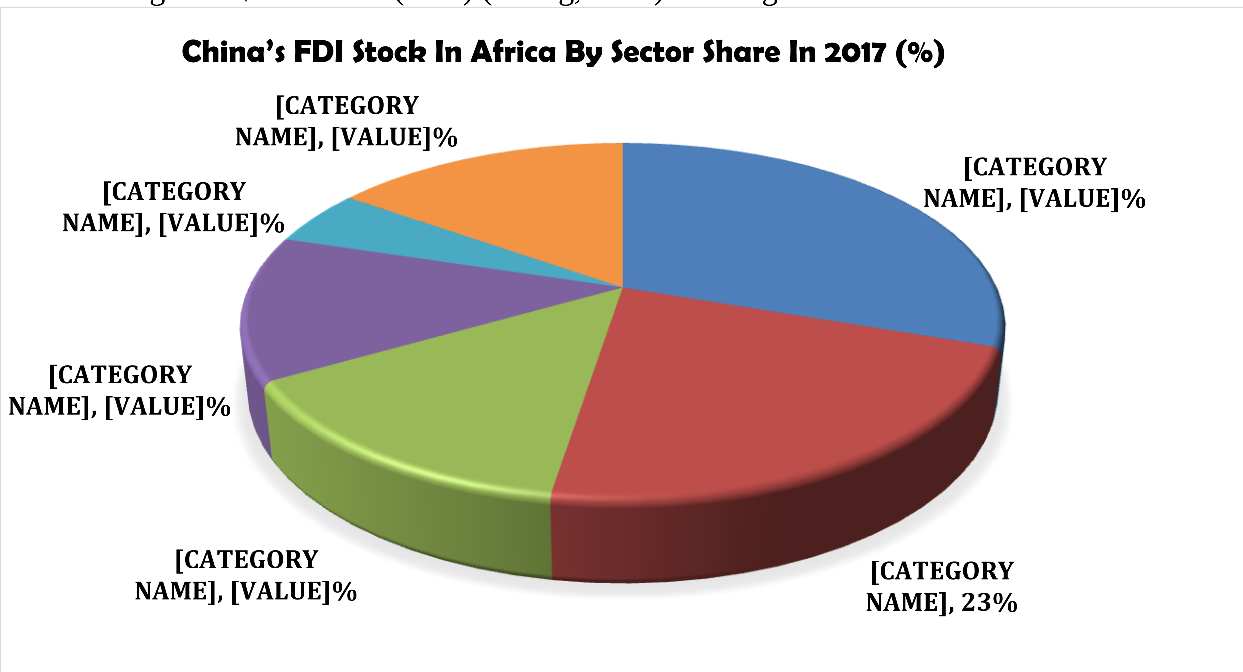

Figure 5 China Sectoral FDI distribution in Africa as of 2017

Source: Zhang (2022) and MOFCOM (2018)

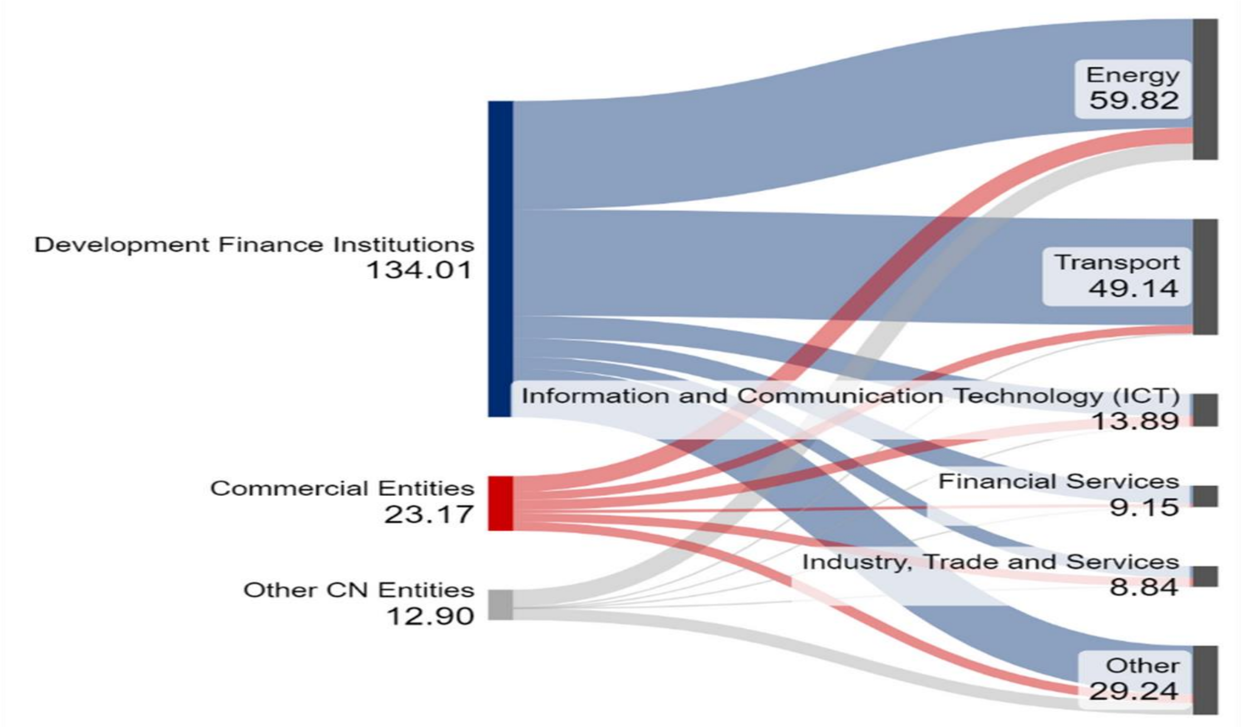

Figure 6 Loans from China to Sectors in Africa in Billion USD from 2000 to 2022

Source: Global Development Policy Center (2024)

Notably, from Figure 6, Global Development Policy Center (2024) indicates that out of the $170.08 billion, around $134.01 billion was extended by China's two principal development finance institutions, the China Development Bank (CDB) and the Export-Import Bank of China (CHEXIM). These financial flows were primarily directed toward sectors such as energy, transportation, information and communication technology (ICT), financial services, and broader industry and trade-related services. While the scale and influence of China's development financing have been substantial, the volume of new lending has steadily decreased since peaking in 2016. Rising debt levels among African nations, coupled with elevated global interest rates, have increasingly constrained the continent's capacity to take on additional Chinese loans.

Additionally, for many African governments, Oyintarelado (2024) indicates that, FDI is viewed as a strategic source of capital that supports development objectives without adding to public debt burdens. Between 2000 and 2022, Chinese firms announced approximately $112.34 billion in greenfield investments and finalized around $24.60 billion in mergers and acquisitions (M&A) (Global Development Policy Center, 2024). A significant portion, roughly two-thirds, of both investment types targeted resource-abundant nations, including Algeria, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Egypt, Ghana, Guinea, Morocco, Nigeria, Niger, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. These FDI flows have generally followed cyclical trends, reflecting the nature of equity-based investments where capital is committed with the aim of generating returns upon exit. Following a slump during the 2020–2021 period, both greenfield investment announcements and M&A transactions have shown signs of recovery (Oyintarelado, 2024).

Energy and non-energy mineral sectors continue to dominate the distribution of Chinese FDI, particularly driven by state-owned enterprises (SOEs) aiming to secure strategic resources and expand their global footprint. Around 30% of greenfield investment has been channeled into industrial, trade, and service-related ventures, primarily in manufacturing. Additionally, 27% of greenfield flows targeted the energy sector, while 25% were allocated to non-energy mining and processing projects. These same sectors have also attracted the majority of China's M&A activity. Energy-related investments, especially in fossil fuels, have attracted the most capital, largely due to the strategic priorities of Chinese SOEs. Nevertheless, there has been a growing interest in renewable energy: approximately 8% of greenfield investment, about $3.31 billion, was directed toward projects in solar and wind power generation. This compares favorably with the $975.11 million in Chinese overseas development finance allocated to renewable energy over the same period. These green energy projects have been implemented by a mix of private firms, state-owned entities, and companies with hybrid ownership structures. Despite this notable push into renewable energy, the bulk of Chinese FDI in the energy space continues to focus on fossil fuel extraction and processing, underscoring China's emphasis on securing traditional energy sources while gradually expanding its green portfolio (Oyintarelado, 2024). See Figure 7.

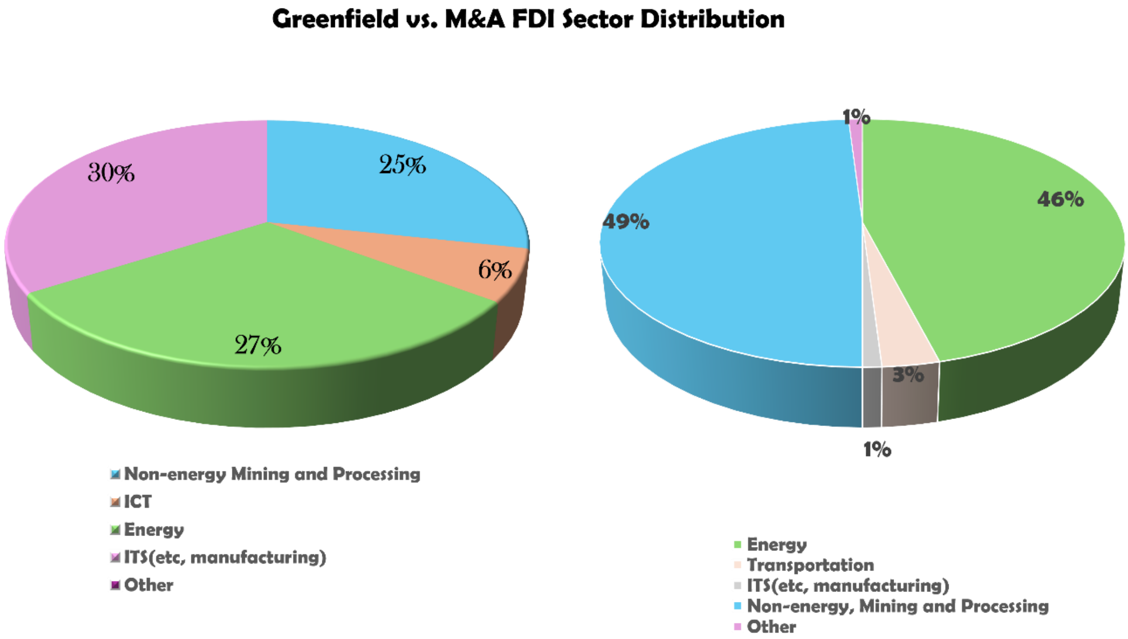

Figure 7 Greenfield vs. M&A FDI Sector Distribution

Source: Boston University Global Development Policy Center and African Economic Research Consortium (2024).

6 Economic Impacts of Chinese FDI in Africa

6.1 GDP growth

Chinese FDI has become a major driver of GDP growth in several African countries, especially since the early 2000s. These investments have had direct implications for GDP growth in countries with high FDI inflows (Munjal et al., 2022; Oladipupo & Ajide, 2024). For instance, Ethiopia, one of the largest recipients of Chinese investment in East Africa, experienced average GDP growth of 9.5% annually from 2010 to 2019, partly due to large-scale Chinese-backed infrastructure projects like the Addis Ababa–Djibouti Railway and industrial parks such as the Eastern Industrial Zone (Yiblet, 2024). Similarly, Angola, rich in oil resources, received over $20 billion in loans and investments from China between 2003 and 2018, helping to rebuild post-civil war infrastructure and contribute to its GDP rebound in the mid-2000s (Wang et al., 2022).

In Kenya, Chinese investments in transport infrastructure, most notably the Standard Gauge Railway (SGR) project funded by China Exim Bank, have been linked to modest improvements in trade logistics and GDP growth, which averaged 5.5% from 2013 to 2019 (Tasinda et al., 2021). In Zambia, Chinese FDI in copper mining and infrastructure has contributed significantly to GDP and export earnings, with China accounting for over 60% of Zambia's copper exports by 2020 (Oladipupo & Ajide, 2024). Furthermore, Chinese-funded projects often boost local employment and generate demand for services, creating multiplier effects on the broader economy. However, the growth impact varies depending on how FDI is structured (Bosede Adegboye et al., 2020; Lawal et al., 2025). In countries where Chinese FDI is focused mainly on extractive industries or carried out through resource-backed loans (e.g. the Democratic Republic of Congo or Angola), the long-term benefits to GDP are more volatile and tied to commodity price swings. Additionally, where project financing has led to high debt burdens without corresponding productivity gains, the contribution to sustainable GDP growth becomes questionable (Adelakun & Ogujiuba, 2023; Atitianti & Asiamah, 2023). Nonetheless, across the continent, Chinese FDI has broadly contributed to accelerating GDP growth by providing capital, infrastructure, and market access, particularly in economies that have strategically aligned such investment with national development priorities (Yuan & Ji, 2025).

6.2 Job creation, employment, and technology transfer

Chinese FDI has contributed significantly to job creation in Africa, especially through investments in infrastructure, manufacturing, and mining. According to the African Development Bank (AfDB) and McKinsey's "Dance of the Lions and Dragons" report (2017), there are over 10,000 Chinese firms operating in Africa, about 89% of which are privately owned (McKinsey, 2017). These firms directly employ over 300,000 Africans, with indirect employment effects extending to over a million jobs when local supply chains and service industries are factored in (McKinsey, 2017). In Ethiopia, Chinese manufacturing investments, such as those in the Hawassa Industrial Park and the Eastern Industrial Zone, have provided thousands of jobs, particularly for women in the garment and textile sectors. In Nigeria, Chinese construction companies have employed tens of thousands of local workers on large-scale infrastructure projects like railways and roads (Ibonye, 2022). In Zambia, Chinese-owned mining operations, such as those in the Copperbelt, have been major employers, though not without controversy regarding working conditions and wage disparities (Lawal et al., 2025). However, job quality varies. In some countries, there are concerns about labor practices, wage gaps between Chinese and local workers, and limited upward mobility for African employees (Adegboye & Okorie, 2023). In addition, in more technical sectors like power generation or heavy industry, Chinese firms have sometimes preferred to bring in skilled labor from China rather than investing in local workforce training (Rathnayake et al., 2023).

Regarding technology transfer, the record is mixed but evolving. In sectors such as construction, telecommunications, and light manufacturing, African workers and firms have gained access to new tools, machinery, and business practices (Abdulsalam et al., 2021; Tasinda et al., 2021). For instance, Huawei and ZTE, two major Chinese telecom firms, have partnered with local universities and governments to train thousands of African engineers and technicians. In Ethiopia and Kenya, Chinese firms have helped local suppliers upgrade standards to meet global market requirements, fostering learning-by-doing and gradual capability building (Michael et al., 2021; Yuan & Ji, 2025). Yet, full-scale technology transfer, especially involving high-level R&D or ownership of intellectual property, has been limited. Much of the "technology transfer" has taken the form of operational knowledge, rather than deep technical or strategic know-how (Abdulsalam et al., 2021). Additionally, Chinese firms often retain control of critical components of production and technology, making it difficult for local firms to independently replicate or build on imported systems (Wang et al., 2022).

7 Criticisms of Chinese Contributions to Africa

7.1 Resource exploitation concerns

A central criticism of Chinese FDI in Africa is the extractive nature of many of its investments, particularly in natural resource sectors like oil, gas, and mining. Countries such as Angola, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Zambia, and Sudan have seen billions in Chinese investment targeting crude oil, copper, cobalt, and other valuable commodities (Abdessultane et al., 2025; Lawal et al., 2025). In many of these cases, investments are structured around resource-for-infrastructure deals, where China provides funding or builds infrastructure in exchange for long-term access to raw materials. Critics argue this model echoes colonial-era patterns of resource extraction with limited local processing, value addition, or reinvestment (Yanne Sylvaire et al., 2022). For instance, in Zambia's copper industry, most of the copper is extracted and exported to China without developing local smelting or downstream industries. Similarly, in the DRC, Chinese companies have secured access to cobalt mines, vital for electric vehicle batteries, under opaque agreements, with minimal benefit flowing back to local communities. Environmental degradation and unsafe working conditions are also frequent concerns, particularly in mining zones, where Chinese firms have been accused of flouting labor and environmental standards (Brazys & Jung, 2024). Moreover, the asymmetry in bargaining power and lack of transparency in many of these agreements raises concerns about Africa's long-term control over its natural resources.

7.2 Debt sustainability

Another major criticism centers on the issue of debt distress linked to Chinese loans. China has become Africa's largest bilateral lender, with the African continent owing a significant amount running in billion to China as of 2023 (Business Insider Africa, 2025; Mutai, 2025). Many Chinese loans are tied to large infrastructure projects, such as railways, ports, highways, and power plants, and are often collateralized by natural resources or sovereign guarantees (Adelakun & Ogujiuba, 2023; Wang et al., 2022). Countries like

Zambia, Angola, Kenya, and Ethiopia have all experienced increasing debt burdens due to Chinese-financed mega-projects. Zambia defaulted on its debt in 2020, with Chinese creditors holding nearly one-third of its external debt stock. Kenya's Standard Gauge Railway (SGR), financed with over $4.7 billion from Chinese banks, has been criticized as economically unsustainable, with revenues falling short of projections and repayment pressures mounting (Mutai, 2025). Critics argue that some Chinese loans lack due diligence and feasibility assessments, leading to "white elephant" projects and placing long-term fiscal strain on recipient nations. Others raise concerns about the opacity of loan contracts and the lack of public scrutiny, which complicates accountability and risk assessment (Atitianti & Asiamah, 2023; Darko & Kangning, 2022). While China has restructured or forgiven some African debts, concerns about debt-trap diplomacy remain prominent in both academic and policy debates. Find below the rankings of top ten African countries by debt to China (Brautigam, 2020).

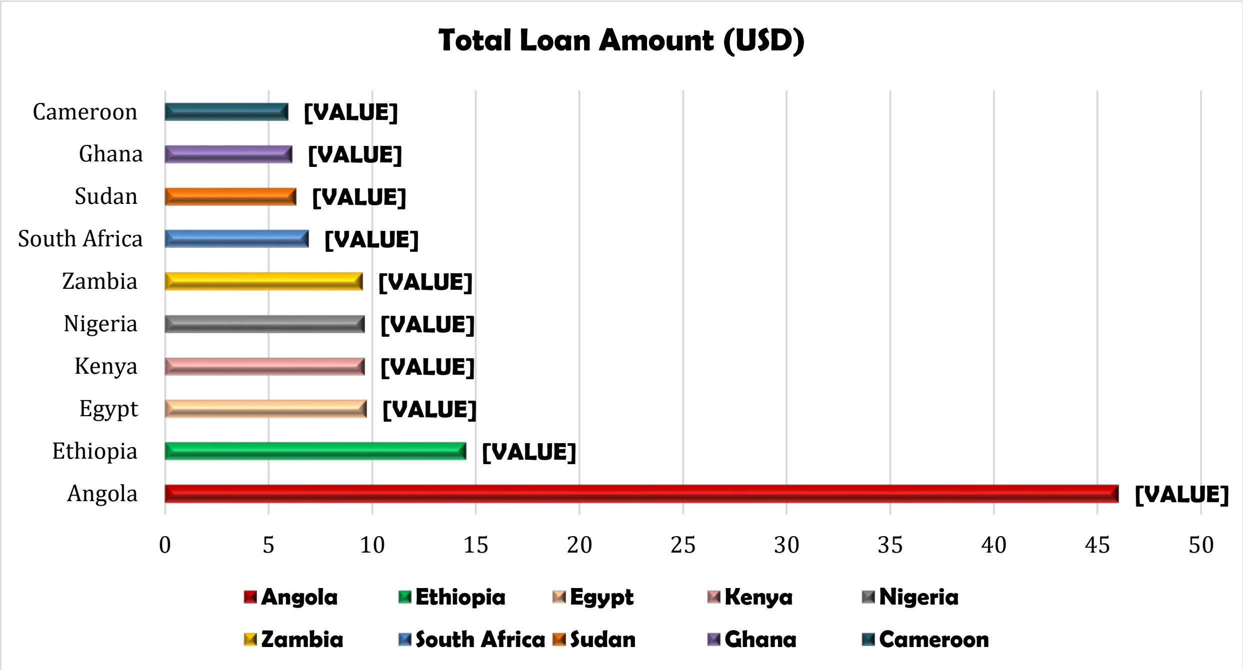

Figure 8 Rankings of the top 10 African countries by debt to China

Source: Business Insider Africa (2025)

7.3 Neo-colonialism

Chinese engagement in Africa is often framed, especially by Western observers and some African civil society groups, as a form of neo-colonialism, wherein economic and strategic interests are pursued under the guise of partnership (Adelakun & Ogujiuba, 2023). Unlike colonial powers, China does not exert direct political control, but critics argue that the scale, structure, and strategic targeting of Chinese investments give Beijing disproportionate influence over African policymaking, sovereignty, and resource governance (Bosede Adegboye et al., 2020). For instance, China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) has led to significant Chinese control over key infrastructure like ports (e.g., in Djibouti) and railways, raising fears about economic dependency and the erosion of national autonomy (Darko & Kangning, 2022). The deployment of large numbers of Chinese laborers and contractors on projects, often instead of hiring locally, reinforces perceptions of a top-down, externally-driven development model (Utesch-Xiong & Kambhampati, 2022). Additionally, Chinese firms often import materials and machinery from China, further limiting local content and reinforcing the notion of economic dominance. While China officially champions a narrative of "win-win cooperation," critics argue that its strategy resembles historical patterns of economic extraction and strategic entrenchment, just under a more modern, market-oriented guise (Atitianti & Asiamah, 2023).

7.4 Competition with local businesses

Chinese firms, particularly in construction, retail, and manufacturing, have also been accused of undercutting local businesses, often by leveraging economies of scale, state subsidies, and cheaper imports (Cheng et al., 2023). In countries like Tanzania, Ghana, Nigeria, and South Africa, small-scale African traders and manufacturers have struggled to compete with the influx of low-cost Chinese goods and the dominance of Chinese-run retail stores (Oladipupo & Ajide, 2024). In the construction sector, Chinese companies frequently win large government contracts, often funded by Chinese banks, leaving local contractors sidelined. Their ability to mobilize large workforces, access cheap finance, and operate efficiently can marginalize domestic firms, stifling the growth of African-owned enterprises (Michael et al., 2021; Utesch-Xiong & Kambhampati, 2022). For example, in Zambia and Kenya, local business associations have protested Chinese involvement in retail and small-scale construction, arguing that Chinese firms enjoy unfair advantages and are displacing indigenous entrepreneurs. This competition also raises concerns about the long-term sustainability of African entrepreneurship, particularly when local industries remain dependent on imported inputs and cannot access similar financial or technical support (Lawal et al., 2025; Rathnayake et al., 2023). Without policies to encourage technology sharing, joint ventures, and local capacity-building, the presence of Chinese firms may lead to market domination rather than market development.

8 Future Trends and Policy Recommendations

As Chinese FDI in Africa continues to evolve, future engagement must shift from resource-driven and infrastructure-heavy investments toward more diversified, inclusive, and sustainable models. This section explores key emerging sectors, policy reforms, and strategies that African governments can adopt to better leverage Chinese investment for long-term economic development.

8.1 Emerging Sectors: Renewable energy, digital economy, and agro-processing.

The next phase of Chinese FDI in Africa is likely to see increased focus on green energy, digital infrastructure, and value-added agriculture, sectors aligned with both African development needs and China’s shifting global investment strategy.

First, renewable energy: As many African countries face electricity deficits, Chinese firms have shown growing interest in solar, wind, and hydropower. Companies like China National Electric Engineering Corporation (CNEEC) and PowerChina have invested in solar plants in Nigeria and Ethiopia. These investments not only address energy access but also align with global climate goals. African governments should prioritize public-private partnerships (PPPs) in renewables and structure contracts to include technology transfer and local training components.

Second, digital economy: Chinese technology giants such as Huawei, ZTE, and Alibaba are expanding Africa’s digital infrastructure through the development of telecom networks, data centers, e-commerce platforms, and smart cities. The expansion of 5G, digital payment systems, and cloud computing presents an opportunity for Africa to leapfrog traditional development pathways. Policymakers should encourage Chinese firms to partner with African tech startups, invest in digital literacy, and comply with local data sovereignty regulations to build a fair and secure digital future.

Third, agro-processing: China is increasingly interested in Africa’s agricultural potential to diversify food imports. Transitioning Chinese FDI toward agro-processing can promote rural industrialization, reduce post-harvest losses, and boost export-oriented value chains. Governments should incentivize investments in processing plants, cold chains, and storage facilities, while linking them to smallholder farmer cooperatives to ensure inclusive growth.

8.2 Streamlining visas for Chinese investors

Facilitating smoother business travel is essential to attracting and retaining high-quality FDI. Many African countries still impose complex, costly, and time-consuming visa procedures for Chinese investors and technical personnel, often creating delays in project execution and discouraging smaller firms from entering the market. To address this, African governments should consider: Implementing e-visa systems and special investor visa categories, modeled after examples in Rwanda and Ethiopia, where simplified entry procedures have improved bilateral business engagement. More so, establishing bilateral visa facilitation agreements with China, especially for long-term business travelers, skilled technicians, and entrepreneurs. Additionally, creating one-stop investment centers that integrate immigration, licensing, and investment facilitation under a single platform to reduce red tape and boost investor confidence. However, these reforms must be balanced with strong labor market protections, ensuring that visa liberalization for Chinese professionals does not come at the expense of local employment or skills development.

8.3 Enhancing local linkages to maximize spillover effects

To ensure Chinese FDI translates into broad-based economic development, African countries must actively strengthen local linkages between foreign investors and domestic industries. Current Chinese investments often operate in enclaves, with limited integration into local supply chains or knowledge ecosystems. Policy recommendations include:

Local Content Requirements: Enforceable, yet realistic, local content laws can require Chinese companies to source materials, labor, and services locally. For example, Ghana's petroleum sector has set benchmarks for local participation that could be adapted in manufacturing and construction sectors.

Joint Ventures and Technology Partnerships: Governments should promote co-investment arrangements that allow local firms to learn-by-doing, share technology, and access new markets. Investment incentives can be tied to knowledge transfer and capacity-building outcomes.

SME Integration and Clustering: Develop industrial parks and special economic zones (SEZs) where local small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) can supply goods and services to Chinese anchor firms. Providing training, finance, and certification support to local suppliers can improve their competitiveness and help create deeper backward and forward linkages.

Monitoring and Evaluation: Establish national mechanisms to monitor the spillover effects of foreign investments, including job quality, training, local procurement, and innovation. This data can inform adaptive policy adjustments and identify best practices.

9 Conclusion

The expansion of Chinese FDI in Africa represents both an unprecedented opportunity and a significant challenge for the continent's economic future. Over the past two decades, Chinese investments have transformed critical sectors such as infrastructure, energy, telecommunications, and manufacturing, while also contributing to GDP growth, employment generation, and technological exposure. However, this engagement has also sparked legitimate concerns around resource exploitation, debt sustainability, competitive pressures on local businesses, and potential neocolonial dynamics. Empirical evidence suggests that while Chinese FDI can serve as a powerful engine for development, its long-term benefits depend heavily on the structure of investments, the quality of host country institutions, and the strategic alignment with national development goals. The uneven distribution of gains, both geographically and sectorally, calls for a more inclusive and forward-looking approach. As African governments deepen their economic ties with China, they must actively shape this relationship through smarter policy frameworks, improved governance, and stronger emphasis on local content, skills transfer, and value addition. Looking forward, greater attention should be placed on emerging sectors such as renewable energy, the digital economy, and agro-processing, areas where mutual benefit can be enhanced. Policy reforms aimed at streamlining investor access, promoting joint ventures, and maximizing spillover effects will be essential to ensure that Chinese FDI acts not as a chain of dependency, but as a bridge toward sustainable, sovereign, and inclusive development across the continent.

References

1. Abate, Y., & Brunn, S. D. (1977). The Emergence of African Voting Blocs and Alliances in The United Nations, 1961–1970. *The Professional Geographer*, *29*(4), 338–346. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.0033-0124.1977.00338.x
2. Abdessultane, M. S., Zhao, Y., & Hami, B. (2025). The Dynamics of Chinese FDI in Africa: A Case Study Algeria. *Business Management and Strategy*, *16*(2), 188. https://doi.org/10.5296/bms.v16i2.22857
3. Abdulsalam, A., Xu, H., Ameer, W., Abdo, A.-B., & Xia, J. (2021). Exploration of the Impact of China's Outward Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) on Economic Growth in Asia and North Africa along the Belt and Road (B&R) Initiative. *Sustainability*, *13*(4), 1623. https://doi.org/10.3390/su13041623
4. Adegboye, F. B., & Okorie, U. E. (2023). Fragility of FDI flows in sub-Saharan Africa region: Does the paradox persist? *Future Business Journal*, *9*(1). https://doi.org/10.1186/s43093-023-00184-6

5. Adelakun, J., & Ogujiuba, K. (2023). A Comparative Analysis of the Determinants of Foreign Direct Investment: The Case of Top Ten Recipients of Foreign Direct Investment in Africa. *Economies*, *11*(10), 244. https://doi.org/10.3390/economies11100244
6. Angessa, A. T., Lemma, B., Yeshitela, K., & Endrias, M. (2022). Community perceptions towards the impacts of ecotourism development in the central highlands of Ethiopia: The case of Lake Wanchi and its adjacent landscapes. *Heliyon*, *8*(2). https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2022.e08924
7. Atitianti, P. A., & Asiamah, S. K. (2023). Chinese foreign direct investment and business start-ups in Africa. *African Journal of Science, Technology, Innovation and Development*, *15*(6), 661–670. https://doi.org/10.1080/20421338.2023.2176612
8. Bosede Adegboye, F., Femi Adesina, T., Aanu Ojeka, S., Abosede Akinjare, V., & Omowunmi Olokoyo, F. (2020). Foreign direct investment, dual gap model and economic development in sub-Saharan Africa. *Cogent Social Sciences*, *6*(1). https://doi.org/10.1080/23311886.2020.1743138
9. Brautigam, D. (2020). A critical look at Chinese 'debt-trap diplomacy': The rise of a meme. *Area Development and Policy*, *5*(1), 1–14. https://doi.org/10.1080/23792949.2019.1689828
10. Brazys, S., & Jung, Y. S. (2024). Paving Their Own Road? Local Chinese and World Bank Aid and Foreign Direct Investment in Africa. *The Chinese Journal of International Politics*, *17*(1), 28–47. https://doi.org/10.1093/cjip/poae003
11. Business Insider Africa. (2025, June 7). *Top 10 African countries with the highest cumulative debt to China (2000–2023).* https://africa.businessinsider.com/local/markets/top-10-african-countries-with-the-highest-cumulative-debt-to-china-20002023/4085stj
12. Cheng, H., Mawdsley, E., & Liu, W. (2023). Reading the Forum on China–Africa Cooperation (2000-2021): Geoeconomics, governance, and embedding 'creative involvement.' *Area Development and Policy*, *8*(1), 60–83. https://doi.org/10.1080/23792949.2022.2092018
13. China Africa Research Initiative. (2024). *Chinese FDI in Africa Data Overview*. https://www.sais-cari.org/chinese-investment-in-africa
14. Darko, E. M., & Kangning, X. (2022). An Examination of The Relationship Between China's Foreign Direct Investment and Industrial Performance in Africa. *The Singapore Economic Review*, 1–23. https://doi.org/10.1142/s0217590822500357
15. Gagne, O. (2018). Cultural Distance and FDI: China Africa Perspective. *Open Journal of Business and Management*, *06*(02), 382–399. https://doi.org/10.4236/ojbm.2018.62028
16. Giannecchini, P., & Taylor, I. (2018). The eastern industrial zone in Ethiopia: Catalyst for development? *Geoforum*, *88*, 28–35. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.geoforum.2017.11.003
17. Global Development Policy Center. (2024). *China-Africa Economic Bulletin, 2024 Edition*. https://www.bu.edu/gdp/2024/04/01/china-africa-economic-bulletin-2024-edition/
18. Ibonye, V. (2022). The Forum on China–Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) and knowledge transfer in Sino-Nigerian development cooperation. *Asian Journal of Comparative Politics*, *7*(4), 1045–1069. https://doi.org/10.1177/2057891120912333
19. International Monetary Fund. (2023). *"At a Crossroads: Sub-Saharan Africa's Economic Relations with China" In Regional Economic Outlook: Sub-Saharan Africa, Light on the Horizon?*
20. King, K. (2025). Forum on China–Africa Cooperation 9: The Massive Ambitions for Education and Cultural Cooperation Between China and Africa. *ECNU Review of Education*. https://doi.org/10.1177/20965311251322185
21. Komakech, R. A., & Ombati, T. O. (2023). Belt and Road Initiative in Developing Countries: Lessons from Five Selected Countries in Africa. *Sustainability*, *15*(16), 12334. https://doi.org/10.3390/su151612334
22. Lawal, A. A., Xijuang, H., Fujian Agriculture and Forestry University, Fuzhou, China, Zololo, U., & Fujian Agriculture and Forestry University, Fuzhou, China. (2025). Foreign Direct Investment and Agricultural Growth: Panel Data Evidence on Chinese FDI Inflows in African Countries. *Asian Journal of Agriculture and Development*, *22*(1), 38–56. https://doi.org/10.37801/ajad2025.22.1.3
23. Lisinge, R. T. (2020). The Belt and Road Initiative and Africa's regional infrastructure development: Implications and lessons. *Transnational Corporations Review*, *12*(4), 425–438. https://doi.org/10.1080/19186444.2020.1795527
24. McKinsey. (2017). *Dance of the Lions and Dragons; How are Africa and China engaging, and how will the partnership evolve?*

25. Miao, M., Yushi, J., & Borojo, D. G. (2020). The Impacts of China–Africa Economic Relation on Factor Productivity of African Countries. *Economies*, *8*(2), 47. https://doi.org/10.3390/economies8020047
26. Michael, M., Glory, E. O., Sylvester, O., & Daniel, O. T. (2021). The Chinese foreign direct investment to Sub-Sahara Africa. *RUDN Journal of Economics*, *29*(4), 796–805. https://doi.org/10.22363/2313-2329-2021-29-4-796-805
27. Ministry of Commerce (MOFCOM) of China. (2018). *2017 Statistical bulletin of China's outward foreign direct investment, Beijing, China.*
28. Munjal, S., Varma, S., & Bhatnagar, A. (2022). A comparative analysis of Indian and Chinese FDI into Africa: The role of governance and alliances. *Journal of Business Research*, *149*, 1018–1033. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2022.05.087
29. Mutai, N. (2025). *China's Debt to Africa: A Balancing Act Between Development and Dependency*. https://democracyinafrica.org/chinas-debt-to-africa-a-balancing-act-between-development-and-dependency/
30. Nyabiage, J. (2024, February 1). *China-Africa trade hit US$282 billion in 2023 but Africa's trade deficit widens, with commodity prices a key factor*. https://www.scmp.com/news/china/diplomacy/article/3250552/china-africa-trade-hit-282-billion-2023-africas-trade-deficit-widens-commodity-prices-key-factor
31. Oladipupo, S. A., & Ajide, F. M. (2024). Environmental effect of Chinese FDI in Africa: Evidence from pooled mean group. *Sustainable Development*, *32*(4), 3569–3580. https://doi.org/10.1002/sd.2868
32. Oyintarelado, M. (2024). *10 Charts to Explain 22 Years of China-Africa Trade, Overseas Development Finance and Foreign Direct Investment*. https://www.bu.edu/gdp/2024/04/02/10-charts-to-explain-22-years-of-china-africa-trade-overseas-development-finance-and-foreign-direct-investment/
33. Pintér, M. G. (2022). *China's Military Base in Djibouti* (KKI Elemzések). Külügyi és Külgazdasági Intézet. https://doi.org/10.47683/kkielemzesek.ke-2022.10
34. Rahman, N. (2024). *The Evolution of China's Foreign Aid Perspective towards Africa: The Case Study of TAZARA Railway from the Cold War to the Present*.
35. Rahman, Z. U. (2022). A comprehensive overview of China's belt and road initiative and its implication for the region and beyond. *Journal of Public Affairs*, *22*(1). https://doi.org/10.1002/pa.2298
36. Rathnayake, S., Jayakody, S., Wannisinghe, P., Wijayasinghe, D., Jayathilaka, R., & Madhavika, N. (2023). Macroeconomic factors affecting FDI in the African region. *PLOS ONE*, *18*(1), e0280843. https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0280843
37. Saliou Kokouma, D. M., & Xu, K. (2013). Attracting Chinese Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) to Africa: Determinants and Policies - The Case of Guinea. *International Journal of Financial Research*, *4*(4). https://doi.org/10.5430/ijfr.v4n4p52
38. Suresh, P. (2022). *Foreign Policy of China Under Deng Xiaoping: Economic Dimension. In: Foreign Policy of China Under Deng Xiaoping* . Palgrave Macmillan.
39. Tasinda, O. T., Ze, T., & Imanche, S. A. (2021). A Panel Data Analysis of the Impact of Chinese Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), Remittances and Foreign Aid on Human Capital Growth and Brain Drain in Africa. *Journal of Data Analysis and Information Processing*, *09*(03), 175–188. https://doi.org/10.4236/jdaip.2021.93012
40. United Nations Industrial Development Organization. (2024). *China-Africa Development Fund*. https://www.unido.org/node/84747
41. Utesch-Xiong, F., & Kambhampati, U. S. (2022). Determinants of Chinese Foreign Direct Investment in Africa. *Journal of African Business*, *23*(4), 833–850. https://doi.org/10.1080/15228916.2021.1954446
42. Wang, X., Pearson, M. M., & McCauley, J. F. (2022). Foreign Direct Investment, Unmet Expectations, and the Prospects of Political Leaders: Evidence from Chinese Investment in Africa. *The Journal of Politics*, *84*(3), 1403–1419. https://doi.org/10.1086/717849
43. World Economic Forum. (2024, June 25). *Why strong regional value chains will be vital to the next chapter of China and Africa's economic relationship*.

https://www.weforum.org/stories/2024/06/why-strong-regional-value-chains-will-be-vital-to-the-next-chapter-of-china-and-africas-economic-relationship/
44. Xinhua. (2024, August 14). *China, Africa embrace closer economic, trade ties*. https://english.www.gov.cn/news/202408/14/content_WS66bca5aac6d0868f4e8e9e94.html
45. Yanne Sylvaire, D. D., Qing, W. H., Ran, C. H., Kassai, D. L., Vincent, N., Candide Douce, D. A., Frank, O.-K., Nicaise, N. P., Traore, F., & Boris, A. F. (2022). The impact of China's foreign direct investment on Africa's inclusive development. *Social Sciences & Humanities Open*, *6*(1), 100276. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ssaho.2022.100276
46. Yiblet, F. (2024). The Role of Chinese Manufacturing Industries in Enhancing Economic Diplomacy Between Ethiopia and China. *International and Public Affairs*, *8*(2), 40–53. https://doi.org/10.11648/j.ipa.20240802.14
47. Yuan, L., & Ji, P. (2025). Motives of Chinese foreign direct investment in Africa: With regulation effects of institutional quality. *PLOS One*, *20*(6), e0326970. https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0326970
48. Zhang, K. H. (2022). *Chinese Foreign Direct Investment in Africa: Its Motivations, Determinants, and Impact on the African Economies.*