Beaten Paths on *Terra Incognita*?
Exploring the Internationalization of Chinese NGOs

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Abstract

We study the nascent phenomenon of global Chinese civil society engagement. Instead of being motivated by increasing scale economies of fundraising technology (Aldashev and Verdier, 2009), their internationalization has mainly been convenience and resource driven. Using a Poisson modelling framework on panel data, we show that Chinese NGO projects abroad have closely tracked lagged official development work and lending flows. Experiences on the ground, however, differ widely between locations and organizational capabilities.

Keywords: Chinese NGOs, Development, Location Choice

JEL Codes: F35, F50, O19

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1 Introduction

At least since the Belt and Road Initiative was unveiled in 2013, much emphasis has been placed on assessing the politico-economic, social, and environmental implications of China's globalizing industrial policy. The projects under the initiative aim to assert China's central position within global value chains by ensuring access to resources and export markets, while reducing its domestic overcapacity (Huang, 2016). The complementary internationalization of Chinese non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and civil society groups, however, has thus far seen little empirical investigation. Leveraging decades of domestic experience, Chinese NGOs have since expanded development ties abroad. But amidst growing engagements, a multitude of knowledge-, bureaucracy-, and funding-related challenges remains.

This paper offers a first quantitative analysis of the constraints that underpin the location choices of international projects initiated by Chinese NGOs. We thereby contribute to two related but somewhat underappreciated strands in the development literature. The first is concerned with the theoretical and empirical analysis of NGO project location choice more generally (Aldashev and Verdier, 2009; Brass, 2012; Fruttero and Gauri, 2005; Koch et al., 2009; Marchesini da Costa, 2016). The second discusses the particularities of Chinese civil society groups (Fürst, 2020; C. Hsu, 2010; Wu, 2003) and highlights the resource, leadership, and knowledge constraints they face when internationalizing their operations (J. Y. Hsu et al., 2016; Ketels, 2021; X. Li and Dong, 2018).

To emphasize Chinese NGOs is insofar pertinent, as technically a "Chinese NGO" does not exist. The term "NGO" (*fei zhengfu zuzhi*) has decidedly Western origins and hence lacks a civil society equivalent in China, partly to avoid its anti-government connotation (Fürst, 2020). Compared to organizations in democratic societies that commonly stand in an opposing, or at least counterbalancing, relationship to their governments, their Chinese counterparts tend maintain closer (financial) ties with state entities (C. Hsu, 2010). This ensures that instead of weakening the state and preempting governmental overreach, they strengthen it by filling in institutional gaps or by providing public goods to remote locations (C. Hsu, 2010). Given these

differences and with a larger sample in mind, we adopt a broader definition of NGO activity to include projects by government-organized NGOs (GONGOs), grassroots and civil service organizations, as well as corporate and philanthropic foundations.

Using Poisson modelling approach we show that while geographic and altruistic factors do matter for project choice, so do lagged official Chinese lending flows and government development projects. These findings highlight an important political dimension to NGOs' decision to embark on operations abroad. Supporting the findings by Koch et al., 2009, Chinese NGOs tend to follow official (development) resource allocations. This per se does not mean, however, that the organizations act with strategic intent in fostering China's soft power diplomacy agenda. Given their hitherto limited scope, they likely simply for cost, convenience, and (intertemporal) funding reasons replicate the destination countries of official sources. In line with this analysis, we do not find strong evidence that NGOs are motivated by political factors such as a country's alignment with China directly. Yet these do matter somewhat in how the aid and projects get allocated in the first place.

Our findings thus complement the extant literature in two ways: First, previous studies focused only on domestic donor competition (e.g. via project profiling), economies of scale and, cost factors to explain why NGOs internationalize (Aldashev and Verdier, 2009), and tend to cluster in their operations in recipient countries (Koch et al., 2009). We add both a political and knowledge dimension to this decision. Second, we qualitatively map out the (individual) histories of Chinese civil society groups 'going out', suggesting that the obstacles are far from uniform, with more established GONGOs usually faring the best.

What follows in Section (2) is a brief outline of the extent of Chinese NGO internationalization, both on a holistic as well as an organizational level. We further discuss the theoretic factors governing NGO location choice more generally. Section (3) introduces our panel and econometric model. We present and evaluate the results in Section (4). Section (5) notes several limitations and concludes.

2 Time to go out?

2.1 Historical Background

The initial internationalization experiences of Chinese NGOs coincided with a more outward directed change in government policy in the early 2000s. Under the "Going Out Strategy" (*zou chuqu zhanlüe*) introduced in 2001, the CCP encouraged local businesses to leverage the country's new accession to the WTO by expanding their operations abroad, gaining access to new export markets and technologies, while securing resources for the country's expanding manufacturing industries. Global activity by Chinese NGOs was, however, comparatively sporadic and and centered around humanitarian donations. One notable example occurred in 2005, when the China Foundation For Poverty Alleviation (*zhongguo fupin jijinhui*) donated goods worth 44 million RMB to areas hit by the tsunami in Sumatra (Wang, 2020). In the early 2010s, China's global reach expanded considerably with its increase in developmental finance, the effectuation of several free trade agreements such as with ASEAN, and the start of the Belt and Road Initiative in 2013. The role of (GO)NGOs were thereby understood as to improve China's global image, while simultaneously reducing some of the social and environmental repercussions of its investments (J. Y. Hsu et al., 2016; Ketels, 2021).

Internally, this 'going out' process has been sustained by robust economic and technological development, coupled with concurrent increases in civic engagement within China. According to Ministry of Civil Affairs, by the end of the 2019 around 866 000 civil service organizations (*shehui zuzhi*) operated in China, having grown steadily at around 5-10% p.a. in previous years (MCA, 2019). This increase has led to an rise in domestic competition, which - in an effort to differentiate themselves - has incentivized some NGOs to expand their operations overseas (X. Li and Dong, 2018). Contrary to the theory by Aldashev and Verdier, 2009,though scaling up international fundraising technologies has played a limited role. Instead, often dependent on the government funding, organizations have sought to increase their access to official and private resources by expanding to locations that suits China's political and commercial interests

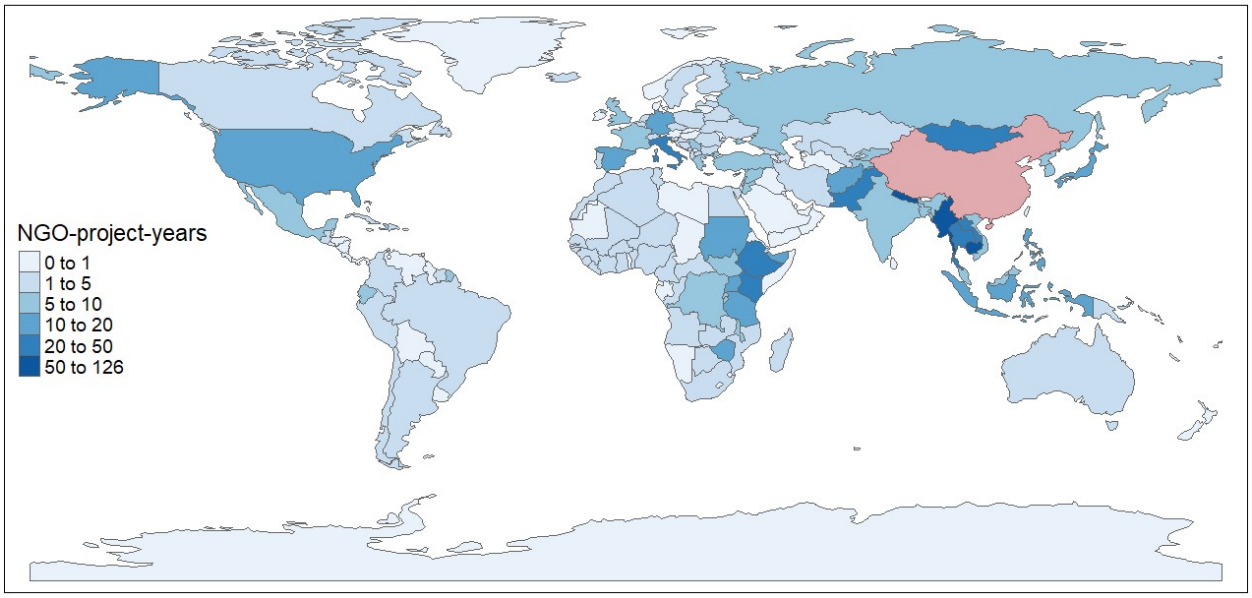
(X. Li and Dong, 2018).

It is important to note, however, that despite the increases in activity, international engagement is still relatively sparse. There are three broad reasons for this: The first is that tight domestic legislation makes it difficult for organizations to gain official status and operate legally. Additional restrictions on the outflow of capital and equipment further curtail their maneuverability (J. Y. Hsu et al., 2016; X. Li and Dong, 2018). Secondly, while international organizations have facilitated local Chinese NGOs to 'go out' (H. Li, 2021), overall project management skills and experience of how to run transnational (fundraising) operations successfully remain scarce. Those who possess them can likely command higher salaries in industry. The decision to expand abroad has therefore hinged mostly on NGO leaders themselves, a dependency that may jeopardize future operations due a lack of succession (H. Li, 2019).

A third reason is that even after more than 40 years of remarkable progress, domestic inequalities between the comparatively affluent coastal regions and more rural areas remain in China. That development needs persist locally has arguably made it more difficult to justify extensive operations abroad to domestic donors. Concerted efforts however became much more feasible when comparative need was more apparent, such as following the Nepalese earthquake in 2015. In its aftermath, more than three dozen Chinese NGOs mobilized both volunteers, as well as financial and in kind humanitarian assistance worth more than 45 million RMB for those affected.

Even though many of these challenges remain intact, efforts to internationalize operations increased significantly after 2015. By 2018, over 100 NGO projects (including donations) were conducted annually, of which around 95% were located either in Africa or Asia. This number more than tripled two years later following the Covid-19 outbreak. Disregarding pandemic related donations, Figure (1) shows that Chinese NGO projects are mainly clustered around developing countries in East Africa (Ethiopia and Kenya), as well as South and Southeast Asia, particularly in Nepal, Myanmar, and Cambodia [see Figure (2)]. Around 39 % of projects are donations of equipment such as medical supplies, 26 % and 17% of them are related to public

Figure 1: Internationalization of Chinese NGOs



Notes: Aggregate number of projects by Chinese-based NGOs and foundations 2005-2020. The concentration in Europe and the US arises exclusively from Covid-19 related donations. Projects spanning over multiple years or countries are recorded for every year and country of origin. Longer projects thus feature more heavily as they suggest stronger NGO engagement. Data: Wang, 2020.

infrastructure and medical procedures respectively, as well as around 5% each are dedicated towards training and volunteering (Wang, 2021). However, even despite those increases, Chinese NGO activity abroad continues to be a nascent phenomenon, that dwarfs in comparison to official development spending.

2.2 Ground-level experiences

Amity Foundation

The Amity Foundation (*aide jijinhui*) is a Nanjing-based Christian charity founded in 1985 that focuses on humanitarian aid, foundational education, social entrepreneurship, and religious advocacy. Though operating mostly in underdeveloped regions in mainland China, it has since provided assistance on a global scale with projects in Cambodia, Ethiopia, Ecuador, Kenya, Nepal, and Madagascar. In the aftermaths of the 2015 Nepalese earthquake and the 2019 floods, the organization has contributed more than 10 million RMB to fund both immediate hu-

manitarian aid, as well reconstruction and capacity building efforts.

Setting up an office Addis Ababa, Ethiopia in 2015, Amity also became the first Chinese NGO to maintain permanent operations in Africa . Two years later, in response to the ongoing droughts in the country, the organization donated 4 million RMB for water provision, purification, and hygiene (Wang, 2020). Collaborating with local farmers and roasters in Hong Kong, it has moreover established distribution channels of sustainable Ethiopian coffee to China. Apart from being sold online, this coffee is used in some products by Amity Bakery, a social enterprise providing vocational training and employment to people with disabilities. Transnational operational synergies are thus created within the organization.

Their international presence again expanded in 2016 and 2019 when Amity opened additional offices in Geneva, Switzerland and Nairobi, Kenya respectively. The former serves as a hub to further international cooperation between Chinese NGOs and UN organizations, particularly in the wake of the Belt and Road Initiative. The Kenyan office constitutes a second African base, from which in 2019 Amity collaborated with local partners to provide educational support and equipment to underprivileged children in Mathare. Notably, this project was funded by the Jiangsu Provincial government, which has actively encouraged local NGOs to go global (Amity Foundation, 2019). Both these internationalization efforts demonstrate how funding and resource dependence align national NGOs' ambitions to 'go out' with those of China's foreign policy.

Global Environmental Institute

Founded in 2004 in Beijing, the Global Environmental Institute (GEI) (*yongxu quanqiu huanjing yanjiusuo*) aims at proposing evidence based solutions to environmental and sustainability challenges within and outside China. In particular, its programs touch on three broad areas: (1) energy and climate change, (2) ecosystem conservation and community development, as well as (3) trade, investment, and environmental challenges. Between 2005 and 2010 the organization conducted their first international project in Sri Lanka, promoting rural biogas technology and solar energy (X. Li and Dong, 2018). Thereafter, the GEI has been particularly active in

Myanmar where between 2011 and 2014 it engaged with several local stakeholders after the suspension of the Myitsone Dam project. Since 2010 the NGO has also engaged with Chinese and Burmese officials to improve the timber governance in Myanmar and curb illegal logging. As part of the *China-Africa Cooperation and Promotion on Forestry Governance* similar projects were launched with Mozambique, Uganda, Cameroon, and the DRC in 2016.

In general, the organization's engagement abroad is rather limited. This can be explained by its human capital/funding constraints that follow for it being foremost an advocacy organization. Often its activities merely include producing research reports, raising awareness, or organizing events with various stakeholders on topics surrounding the environmental challenges of China's economic 'going out' strategy. It is therefore somewhat unclear if and to what extent their actions have a lasting impact in the countries they operate.

China Foundation for Poverty Alleviation

Established in 1989 as a GONGO, the China Foundation for Poverty Alleviation (CFPA) (*zhongguo fupin jijinhui*) focuses mainly on humanitarian aid and poverty alleviation within and outside China. Supervised directly by the *State Council Leading Group Office of Poverty Alleviation and Development*, the CFPA has since become the largest Chinese poverty-related NGO. To date, it has committed humanitarian aid to 24 countries while setting up long term operations in Cambodia, Ethiopia, Myanmar, Nepal, and Sudan, whereby it maintains permanent offices in Addis Adaba, Yangon, and Kathmandu.

The CFPA's programs abroad include direct humanitarian assistance, sanitation projects, training and capacity building, and scholarship programs. Among others, from 2015 to 2020 the organization implemented the *Smiling Children Program* that provided free school meals to students in Ethiopia, Nepal, Myanmar, Cambodia, Laos, and Pakistan. In Uganda, the CFPA cooperated with other international organizations such as the UNHCR to provide land, capacity training, as well as tools and financial support for the resettlement of 19,000 Palabek refugees by 2019. The same year, it's overall commitments to projects abroad amounted to around 66 million RMB (7.5% of all yearly donation revenues) benefiting more than 400,000 people (CFPA,

2019).

While the organization has largely emancipated its management and personnel practices from the government, strong official links remain. One such instance has been noted by J. Y. Hsu, 2016, where in 2011 the CFPA inaugurated the Abu Ushar Friendship Hospital in Sudan with the aim of improving child and maternal health in the region. Beyond the $US one million investment by the organization, a further $US 600 000 was contributed by the state-owned China National Petroleum Corporation. A swift completion required the project to be aligned with the company's commercial and China's political interests in the region (J. Y. Hsu, 2016). This exemplifies how civil society engagements may reflect politico-economic priorities.

In Table (1) we provide a brief typology of Chinese NGOs that summarizes their different experiences going abroad. Rather unsurprisingly, the organizations' size and government connections predominantly drive the extent of their international operations.

Table 1: Typology of Chinese NGO internationalization

	Type			
	GONGO	*Civil NGO*	*Grassroots NGO*	*Corporate Foundation*
International Focus	• Humanitarian donation • Fieldwork • Advocacy	• Human. don. • Fieldwork • Advocacy	• Human. don. • Volunteering	• Human. don. • NGO collaboration
Official Dependency	• Direct financial/political links • Regulatory dependency	• Financial ties • Political supervision • Regulatory dep.	• Regulatory dep. (or Informality)	• (Financial) Regulatory dep.
"Going out" Experience	• Extensive global reach • Political alignment	• Global reach/regional focus • Resource/knowledge constraints	• Regional reach • Mission oriented • Limited capacity	• Global reach • CSR/philanthropy oriented
Examples	China Foundation for Poverty Alleviation	Global Environmental Institute	Rainbow Volunteers Club	Jack Ma Foundation
	Red Cross Society of China	Amity Foundation	Green Watershed	Tencent Foundation
	China Foundation for Peace and Development	Lingshan Charity Foundation	Sichuan Haihui Poverty Alleviation Service Center	ZTE Foundation

Notes: Summary of internationalizing NGO types by relative government involvement. Fieldwork includes all NGO projects that require active physical presence in another country, such as those related to building new health/education infrastructure, or engaging in local capacity building. Global reach indicates that project work takes place on multiple continents, whereas regional work only includes projects located in Asia. The distinction between civil and grassroots NGOs is rather fluid, and is mostly concerned with the extent of their operations abroad, rather than their legal status.

2.3 Location Choice

There are several interrelated and at times competing incentives that can explain NGO location choice, both at the sub- as well as at the national level. We follow Brass, 2012 in classifying them into three broad categories: *altruistic*, *self-serving*, and *political*.

Given the nature of their work, we would first expect NGO projects to be to some extent *altruistically* situated in comparatively more deprived areas. This is because in poorer locations their marginal humanitarian contribution tends to be larger. Despite its intuitive appeal, this assumption remains somewhat controversial at the sub-national level. Fruttero and Gauri, 2005 for instance find little evidence that NGOs in Bangladesh locate where aggregate (regional) poverty levels or landlessness are greater, but they might still target the relatively deprived in otherwise richer localities. In addition, NGOs are often found to cluster where others are already present, and not necessarily where comparative need is greatest (Bielefeld and Murdoch, 2004; Fruttero and Gauri, 2005; Koch et al., 2009). This suggest that other factors such as agglomeration effects (shared infrastructure, knowledge spillovers, density, and better coordination), play a significant role in NGO placement, while the need to differentiate themselves from competing organizations plays a subordinate role. Analyzing their locations in Kenya, Brass, 2012 conversely does find significant positive correlations between NGO placement and a variety of measures of economic deprivation including HIV prevalence and % without access to health care. At the national level we anticipate, however, that the negative association between economic prosperity or development indicators and international NGO location choice hold rather unambiguously.

Self-serving or convenience factors include a variety of variables that might influence an organization's cost function directly. Since freed up resources can then be used for helping more people, the distinction between altruistic and self-serving incentives is not always clear-cut. Intuitively, NGOs would choose to locate their projects in areas that are relatively accessible (both to providers and beneficiaries), for instance in proximity of urban centers or intact infrastructure. Accessibility is relevant both for the execution of projects as well as for the retention of

personal, who, albeit often ideologically motivated, may not be willing to put up with overly harsh conditions (Brass, 2012).

As we use country level data, our study does not consider this within country variation of convenience factors. What is relevant for our purposes are considerations such as the geographical distance from China, or those factors which likely facilitate the coordination of projects by bridging information and knowledge asymmetries between Chinese NGOs and local partners. In view of the human capital constraints these organizations often face while running operations abroad, the latter may be especially important. Several proxies for such convenience factors include (1) whether the local language is English, (2) there exists a higher propensity of international development organisations, or (3) strong political and/or economic relationships had previously been established with the Chinese government or enterprises.

Finally, there may also be *political* reasons for a NGO choosing one country over another. This choice may either be influenced by a country's political environment, or by the relationship between the - in our case - Chinese donor and the recipient country. For the former, some governments operating with less institutional accountability may wish to attract international NGOs and development aid to further nepotism and corruption, whilst easing some of the burden of public goods provision. In a similar vein, Dreher et al., 2019 show that African leaders funnel comparatively more Chinese aid to their own birthplaces as clientelistic reward for electoral victory. This suggests that a country's leadership can have considerable sway in directing humanitarian activity locally. Yet it is remains ambiguous whether - if it matters at all - comparatively autocratic governments can attract more or less activity Chinese NGOs.

More likely Chinese NGOs could be influenced by the geo-strategic priorities of the CCP. In particular, since many of them foster tight relationships with the government and often depend on it for funding, they will disproportionately locate in countries where political and soft-power returns for China are greater. This includes Southeast Asian countries within ASEAN such as Cambodia and Myanmar that have historically maintained a more pro-China foreign policy, and whose economies are highly dependent on the Chinese market. Cambodia for that matter

has repeatedly blocked concerted efforts to balance increasing Chinese influence surrounding the South China Sea dispute (Caballero-Anthony, 2014). As ASEAN follows a minimalist consensus-based governance model, maintaining dissent already suffices for limiting opposition to increasing Chinese influence in Southeast Asia. In addition. NGO activity may also complement China's BRI initiative directly by easing some of the negative economic or social ramifications of the investments and thus contribute to China's soft power diplomacy.

In general, neither of these factors will by itself explain why choose where they operate. Location choices will instead be determined by a combination of at times competing incentives.

3 Data & Methodology

3.1 Variable Description

To analyse the determinants of Chinese NGO presence, we create a panel containing proxies for each of the motivational constraints discussed in Section (2.3). The dependent variable *NGO projects* describes the number of NGO initiated projects for every country c at time t and is based on the data compiled by Wang, 2020.

The independent variables *clend* and *GOV* respectively denote the amount of official Chinese-backed finance per capita and government initiated (development) projects per country-year pair from 2000-2014. Both are calculated using the dataset in Dreher et al., 2021 as well as the World Bank, 2020b data for population statistics. The per capita measure of official lending allows us to capture the relative regional preference of Chinese lending flows. Both variables are included as lags to reflect the self-serving and political hypothesis of NGO location choice. This is because official lending and development projects signal China's political intent, while preexisting relationships make it more convenient for NGOs to navigate new environments abroad. The regressors are included as lags to increase panel overlap, account for (though improbable) reverse causality, and test the hypothesis of a 'follower' relationship between official financing and NGO activity. To avoid double counting lending projects, only observations recommended

for research by Dreher et al., 2021 are included in the analysis.

Similar to the *NGO projects* variable, *GOV* is defined rather widely to include professional trainings, technological transfers, public infrastructure projects, equipment donations, as well as grants for cultural institutions such as the Confucius institutes. Overall, as shown in Figures (3) and (4), both lending and government development projects in particular demonstrate a similar spatial distribution as Figure (1), offering some suggestive evidence for the hypothesis that NGOs have followed official government activity to host countries.

We also use several variables to account for the theoretically grounded variation in NGO presence. GDP per capita *(cGDP)* serves as a proxy for overall living standards to control for the altruistic motivations that often characterize NGOs' work. While far from all-encompassing, it is strongly correlated with a variety of measures of living standards such as the Human Development Index. For non-fixed effects models we moreover add the *Distance* in km between the capital city in country c and Beijing. This is done on the assumption that - similar to international trade - NGOs have a preference for closer locations, be it for cost, convenience, or psychological reasons. Bilateral trade, defined as sum of imports and exports to China, is also added since we hypothesize that more projects will be located in countries that are better integrated in Chinese resource value chains. Both *Distance* and trade data (IMF DOTS) are taken from the CEPII gravity data base, whereby due to higher reliability only importer-reported data has been used for calculations (Conte et al., 2020).

Another concern noted in Section (2.3) is that NGO location decisions may be dependent on the recipient country's political environment. It is *prima facie* unclear, however, whether more democratic institutions attract more or less Chinese NGOs given that (1) there may already be more international NGOs in democratic developing countries, (2) higher scores may indicate better administrative capabilities on average, and (3) countries with similar (socialist) political environments likely tend to be preferred, but on average are not particularly democratic. To proxy for regime type, we include a *Polity* variable ρ which is defined as the difference between a democracy δ and an autocracy α score, whereby $\delta, \alpha \in \{0, ..., 10\}$ with 10 denoting the most

democratic/autocratic governments and hence $\rho \in \{-10, ..., 10\}$ (Marshall and Gurr, 2020).

Albeit more convenient for econometric estimation, since democratic and autocratic systems are in theory not located on a spectrum (Marshall and Gurr, 2020), the *Polity* coefficient estimate should be interpreted with some caution. In addition, if relatively anocratic ($\rho \in \{-5, ..., 5\}$) countries are preferred, the coefficient estimate will likely be insignificant. In Table (6) we control for both these concerns by instead replacing *Polity* with three dummies D^i with $i \in \{Autocracy, Anocracy, Democracy\}$. They are defined as 1 if $\rho \in \{-10, ..., -6\}, \{-5, ..., 5\}$, or $\{6, ..., 10\}$ respectively, and 0 otherwise. This has the advantage that no cardinal relationship in polity scores is assumed, which does not take institutional differences serious enough.

Local politics aside, we also consider governmental relations with China directly. We proxy for national political allegiance to China by defining *UN agree* as the number of voting agreements with China in UN general assembly roll-calls based on the data by Voeten et al., 2009. While not providing national positions towards China explicitly, the calls cover a variety issues surrounding human rights, globalization, geopolitical conflicts, (nuclear) disarmament, or illicit traffic. The data thus provides a suitable proxy for relative political alignment on global issues. Yet, one caveat of this measure is that *UN agree* does not proxy for a country's stance on China's foreign policy in particular nor local popular attitudes towards it. To illustrate the global variation, of the on average 93 yearly UN roll-calls between 2000-2020, 73 of Cambodia's votes aligned with that of China, whereas for the United States only 15 did so. As Table (5) suggests in relative terms, *UN agree* reflects countries' relative geopolitical positioning *vis-à-vis* China rather well. The Anglo-sphere and particularly the US appear most opposed in general, whereas many developing and middle income countries in Africa and South-East Asia view China more favorably, with members of the EU positioned in between.

Other control variables include *Socialism* which is defined as *c* is socialist, has a socialist (or Marxist/Leninist) past, or has a constitutional reference to socialism. Despite likely being correlated with other political variables, the variable may reflect historical relationships (e.g. via the CCP's International Department) as well as ideological similarity with China that can influ-

ence NGO location selection. It is therefore added to non-fixed effects specifications. Moreover, the number of World Bank development projects (*WB projects*) is included for every country-time pair to proxy for clustering alongside international development activity. Lastly, *Conflicts* defined as the sum of ongoing violent conflicts in a country, is added to reflect the hypothesis that due to their early stages of internationalization, Chinese NGOs likely avoid conflict-torn countries. One drawback of this measure is that conflicts such as in Kashmir, India or Tigray, Ethiopia are often regional. Human displacement may then create increased need in relatively save regions elsewhere within the same country. Whether the variable is ineffectual, increases or decreases NGO activity is hence rather ambiguous.

All variable descriptions and pairwise correlations of main explanatory regressors are presented briefly in Tables (3) and (4) respectively. Table (2) depicts some basic descriptive statistics of the panel, and associates predictors with theoretic incentives governing NGOs.

Table 2: Descriptive statistics

	Sum	Mean	SD	Min	Max	N	Predictor
NGO projects	945	0.27	1.50	0	46	3,477	*NA*
clend	83,732	25.87	560.73	0	30,652	3,237	*pol./s.s.*
GOV	1,660	0.51	1.18	0	19	3,246	*pol./s.s.*
UN agree	237,618	58.43	19.76	0	102	4,067	*political*
Polity	11,894	3.89	6.27	-10	10	3,058	*political*
Distance (km)	41,292,748	9,190.46	3,873.41	810	19,297	4,493	*self-serving*
Bil. Trade (10^6)	54,162,468	10,964.06	43,239.09	0	695,763	4,940	*self-serving*
cGDP	62,411,645	16,554.81	24,562.32	212	213,038	3,770	*altruistic*
Eng. Language	1,542	0.29	0.45	0	1	5,319	*self-serving*
Socialism	1,308	0.23	0.42	0	1	5,654	*pol./s.s.*
WB projects	9,590	1.70	3.86	0	64	5,654	*alt./s.s.*
Conflicts	1,010	0.19	0.65	0	8	5,338	*alt./s.s.*

Notes: Combined political and self-serving (convenience) factors are denoted as *pol./s.s.*, altruisic and self-serving as *alt./s.s.*

Table 3: Variable summary

	Description	Source
Dep. Var.		
NGO projects	Number of concurrent NGO projects	Wang, 2020
Indep. Var.		
clend	Official Chinese aid or lending per capita	Dreher et al., 2021
GOV projects	Number of Chinese government initiated projects	Dreher et al., 2021
UN agree	Number of agreements with China on roll-calls in the UN assembly	Voeten et al., 2009
Polity	Polity score from complete autocracy (-10) to democracy (10)	Marshall and Gurr, 2020
Bil. Trade	Sum of import and export trade from and to China in $US	Conte et al., 2020
Distance	Distance between the capital city in country c and Beijing in km	Conte et al., 2020
cGDP	GDP per capita in $US 2014	World Bank, 2020b
WB projects	Number of World Bank development related projects	World Bank, 2020a
Conflicts	Number of ongoing armed conflicts by intensity,	Gleditsch et al., 2002
	If $25 \leq d < 999$ (+1) and $d > 1000$ (+2), where d = yearly deaths	Pettersson et al., 2021
Eng. Language	1 if the de facto or de jure language in the country is English, 0 otherwise	
Socialism	1 if c is socialist, has a socialist past, or has a constitutional reference to socialism [see: Table (8)]	

Notes: Table summarizing the main variables in the dataset. All variables except binary variables and *Distance* are indexed for country c and time t.

Table 4: Correlation matrix

	NGO	*clend*	*GOV*	*UN agree*	*Polity*	*Dist.*	*Bil. Trade*	*cGDP*	*Eng. Lang.*	*Social.*
NGO	1									
clend	0.00628	1								
GOV	0.184***	0.00734	1							
UN agree	0.0506**	-0.00822	0.130***	1						
Polity	-0.0366	-0.0780***	-0.115***	-0.228***	1					
Distance	-0.143***	-0.00251	-0.000581	0.0754***	0.210***	1				
Bil. Trade	-0.00191	-0.0105	-0.0698***	-0.124***	0.157***	-0.170***	1			
cGDP	-0.0787***	-0.0275	-0.232***	-0.198***	0.250***	-0.123***	0.225***	1		
Eng. Lang.	0.0469**	0.0388*	0.187***	-0.0190	-0.114***	-0.0247	0.0341*	-0.0958***	1	
Socialism	0.122***	-0.00900	0.203***	0.114***	-0.193***	-0.120***	-0.0570***	-0.286***	-0.0387**	1

Notes: All correlations except *Bil. Trade* with the dependent variable are of the expected sign. Overall correlations are low, indicating a rather low risk of multiple collinearity. *WB projects* and *Conflicts* are both positively correlated with *NGO projects* but omitted for brevity. * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

3.2 Econometric Specification

We consider models of the form,

$$NGO_{c,t} = exp(\beta_1 GOV_{c,(t-\alpha)} + \beta_2 clend_{c,(t-\alpha)} + \mathbf{x}_{c,t}^T \boldsymbol{\gamma} + \mathbf{z}_c^T \boldsymbol{\delta}) + \varepsilon_{ct} \tag{1}$$

where the dependent variable NGO_{ct} denotes the number of Chinese NGO projects in country c at time t. *GOV* and *clend* respectively represent lagged official development projects and finance. $\mathbf{x}_{c,t}^T$ is a vector of country(-time) specific independent variables described in Section (3.1), that proxies for the altruistic, self-serving, and political incentives that NGOs face. For fixed effects specifications, country specific intercepts ζ_c are added in place of time invariant variables $\mathbf{z}_c^T$ to estimate within effects and better account for time-invariant spatial heterogeneity.

Given the high fraction of zero values and the fact that *NGO* is a discrete count variable, the above model will be estimated using a Poisson pseudo maximum likelihood estimator (PPML). This estimator has been shown to be consistent under heteroskedasticity and a high propensity of zero values (Silva and Tenreyro, 2006, 2011). Both concerns are relevant for our panel, considering that in around 81% of country-time pairs there are no NGO projects. Additionally, the error variance is likely to be statistically dependent on the endogenous regressors, i.e. $V[\varepsilon_c|\mathbf{x}_c] \neq V[\varepsilon_c]$, as we would expect a higher variability in NGO engagement in a country conditional on higher Chinese lending or a stronger government development focus caused by exogenous shocks to living conditions. For instance, after the Nepalese earthquake in 2015, both government and NGO operations in the country spiked, but due to the idiosyncrasy of the event the error variance increased as well [see Figure (2)]. Therefore, estimating a standard log-linearized model with OLS would likely lead to inconsistent coefficient estimates.

In Table (5) we estimate both population averaged and fixed effects models. While the former can be used to estimate time-invariant factors such as geographic distance and English language, its coefficient estimates are likely overstated, since between country heterogeneity is

not entirely controlled for. In evaluating the effect size of time variant regressors, we therefore rely mainly on fixed effects specifications, which which in contrast to random effects models allow country specific intercepts ζ_i to be correlated with the endogenous regressors. Moreover, as long as the structural conditional mean assumption[1] is satisfied, the Poisson FE model is robust in terms of consistency and asymptotic normality (Wooldridge, 1999).

To further evaluate the robustness, we repeat estimations with negative binomial regressions under varying lags and additional controls. In particular, we use them to test the interval polity D^i variable, as well as the *WB projects* and *Conflicts* controls. This choice of distribution may be less justified as a data generating process considering the dependent *NGO projects* variable. One advantage of the negative binomial models is, however, that they do allow for overdispersion in the data. In other words, if $Y \sim NB(r,p)$ then $E(Y) = \frac{rp}{(1-p)} < \frac{rp}{(1-p)^2} = Var(Y)$, whereas the Poisson regressions assume an equidispersion. But as the number of failures r diverges, negative binomial converges to the Poisson distribution for a constant mean λ , that is, $\lim_{r\to\infty} NB(r, \frac{\lambda}{r+\lambda})$. Overall, we therefore anticipate that the estimation results to follow the standard Poisson estimates rather closely.

4 Results

The main results of the Poisson estimation are presented in Table (5). Perhaps surprisingly, we find that the political controls *Polity* and *UN agree* are largely insignificant and economically small. The estimation remains consistent when omitting the proxy for political similarity *Socialism*, which has a large and positive effect on project allocation. These findings are in line with the spatial distribution of projects that prioritises socialist and relatively anocratic ($Polity \in \{-5,...,5\}$) countries, whose *UN agree* scores exhibit little variation across countries and time. As we show in Table (7), at least for *GOV*, a country's UN agreement with China and its polity score does matter, however. This implies that some political incentives may be medi-

[1] $E(y_{it}|\boldsymbol{x}_i,\lambda_i) = \lambda_i \mu(\boldsymbol{x}_{it},\boldsymbol{\beta}_0),\ t = 1,...,T$, where $\{(\boldsymbol{y}_i,\boldsymbol{x}_i,\lambda_i),\ i = 1,...,N\}$ are i.i.d. random variables and $\boldsymbol{\beta}_0$ is a unknown vector estimated via ML. In our case, we have $\mu(\cdot) = exp(\cdot)$.

ated through the vector of official development engagement (Baron and Kenny, 1986).

As for the main explanatory variables *GOV* and *clend*, the results support the hypothesis that NGOs mainly follow the government when choosing where to locate their operations. Both for population and fixed effects specifications, the coefficient estimates are positive and significant for 5 to 3 year lags but decrease thereafter. In terms of economic magnitude, the interpretation of the coefficients is straightforward. The FE specification (2) for instance implies that an additional government project is associated with a $(e^{0.222} - 1) \times 100 = 25\%$ increase in NGO projects 5 years later, whereas an additional 1000 $US in lending per capita roughly doubles the number of projects.

It is noteworthy, however, that the effects of *clend* are generally stronger across countries than for fixed effects (within) estimations. This can be explained by the fact that not all country specific heterogeneity is controlled for in PA specifications. The *clend* observations also vary widely between years for any country, as Chinese lending often involves large scale infrastructure projects that only take place sporadically. Since this effect is less prevalent across countries, the estimated coefficient will be larger. Another potential concern is that for FE models the RESET test for functional misspecification are not significant at the 1% level. This issue can be addressed by adding a squared per capita GDP regressor, which decreases the significance of the squared *NGO projects* variable and slightly improves model fit. Even despite that, the Poisson estimation results do provide support for the hypothesis of NGO projects tracking government (development) projects and lending flows.

As for the self-serving and altruistic regressors, their signs are as expected. Although *English language* is statistically insignificant, it indicates an economically sizeable relationship between a country's linguistic environment and location choice. Similarly, more projects are located in places that maintain stronger bilateral trade relations with China, as well as those which are geographically close to Beijing. Moreover, the fact that the sign of per capita GDP estimates changes between population weighted and fixed effects estimations suggests that the organizations locate in relatively poor countries, yet a given country receives more projects if it

grows faster. This interpretation is in line with the clustering of projects in East Africa, South-, and Southeast Asia that have experienced significant economic growth in the past 20 years.

In Table (6) we evaluate the robustness of these results with negative binomial models. The estimates of *GOV* and *clend* tend to be very close to the Poisson estimates. The only difference is that due to the bootstrapping of standard errors in FE specifications, the *clend* coefficient estimates remain statistically insignificant. Similar to Table (5), both effects appear to decrease with lower lags, suggesting that concerns of reverse causality are not pressing. Neither *WB projects* nor *Conflicts* that were added as additional controls appear significant in any of the specifications. One justification for this would be that both only affect a minority of countries and are rather localized. They are therefore hardly relevant for an aggregate count measure of Chinese NGO presence. Put differently, it may be the case that violent clashes in some parts of a country repel NGOs, but the effect is negated by increased presence elsewhere within its borders. The remaining control variable estimates also provide a similar picture as before, with the binary political regressors indicating that a socialist polity matters, whereas being both overly autocratic or democratic is detrimental to NGO location selection.

Table 5: Poisson estimates

	NGO Projects					
	PA	FE	PA	FE	PA	FE
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
$GOV_{(t-5)}$	0.256**	0.222*				
	(0.082)	(0.101)				
$GOV_{(t-3)}$			0.187*	0.109†		
			(0.081)	(0.063)		
$GOV_{(t-1)}$					0.046	-0.154
					(0.067)	(0.147)
$clend_{(t-5)}$ (10^3)	1.270***	0.711**				
	(0.330)	(0.216)				
$clend_{(t-3)}$ (10^3)			1.013**	0.452†		
			(0.388)	(0.235)		
$clend_{(t-1)}$ (10^3)					0.645	0.268
					(0.490)	(0.234)
Polity	0.048	0.071*	0.049	0.069*	0.011	0.082
	(0.049)	(0.034)	(0.048)	(0.034)	(0.041)	(0.068)
UN agree	-0.005	-0.004	-0.001	-0.007	-0.031**	-0.031
	(0.007)	(0.008)	(0.008)	(0.007)	(0.011)	(0.019)
Socialism	1.319*		1.230**		0.977*	
	(0.540)		(0.436)		(0.419)	
Bil. Trade (10^9)	0.011*	0.064*	0.011†	0.062	0.010	0.067
	(0.005)	(0.032)	(0.006)	(0.043)	(0.006)	(0.044)
Distance (10^3)	-0.261***		-0.255***		-0.300***	
	(0.056)		(0.062)		(0.091)	
cGDP (10^3)	-0.124**	0.754	-0.124**	1.317†	-0.148*	0.948
	(0.042)	(0.499)	(0.046)	(0.771)	(0.059)	(0.757)
Eng. language	0.224		0.423		0.783	
	(0.743)		(0.775)		(0.650)	
Constant	-0.150		-0.584		1.567	
	(0.652)		(0.710)		(1.493)	
N	2165	818	2010	607	1702	390
χ^2	444.652	101.364	232.084	113.529	140.874	358.755
RESET	0.292	0.000	0.671	0.000	0.032	0.003
AIC/BIC		972/1000		825/851		551/ 575

Notes: Robust (sandwich) standard errors in parentheses. Uneven models show population weighted Poisson regressions with 1, 3, and 5 year lag of government engagement and official lending. Even specifications repeat the estimations by including fixed effects and controlling for country specific heterogeneity. All coefficient estimates are of the expected sign. The main explanatory variables (*GOV* and per capita lending *clend*) are statistically and economically significant for larger lags. Other political incentives are captured mainly by socialist ideology, not whether a country has an democratic or autocratic government. † $p < 0.10$ * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Table 6: Negative binomial estimates

	NGO Projects					
	PA	FE	PA	FE	PA	FE
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
$GOV_{(t-4)}$	0.319***	0.108†				
	(0.056)	(0.055)				
$GOV_{(t-2)}$			0.168**	0.107*		
			(0.058)	(0.044)		
$GOV_{(t)}$					0.108†	0.037
					(0.060)	(0.065)
$clend_{(t-4)}$ (10^3)	1.107***	1.297				
	(0.299)	(1.615)				
$clend_{(t-2)}$ (10^3)			1.237***	1.243		
			(0.373)	(1.140)		
$clend_{(t)}$ (10^3)					1.233***	0.693
					(0.343)	(1.819)
Autocracy	-1.045	-1.120	-1.071	-1.412	-0.586	-1.922
	(0.893)	(3.405)	(0.838)	(3.789)	(0.865)	(3.380)
Democracy	0.149	-0.025	0.342	-0.511	-0.107	-0.006
	(0.314)	(1.119)	(0.440)	(0.979)	(0.369)	(1.081)
UN agree	-0.001	-0.009	-0.012	-0.018+	-0.016*	-0.028*
	(0.006)	(0.006)	(0.008)	(0.010)	(0.008)	(0.011)
Socialism	0.600†		0.973*		0.545†	
	(0.331)		(0.455)		(0.299)	
WB projects	-0.015	-0.010	-0.022	0.003	0.001	0.038
	(0.027)	(0.031)	(0.029)	(0.039)	(0.028)	(0.045)
Conflicts	0.120	0.167	-0.021	0.256	0.048	-0.076
	(0.131)	(0.169)	(0.204)	(0.162)	(0.132)	(0.199)
Bil. trade (10^9)	0.014**		0.017**	0.023	0.014***	0.026
	(0.004)		(0.005)	(0.017)	(0.003)	(0.016)
Distance (10^3)	-0.264***		-0.253**		-0.181**	
	(0.053)		(0.080)		(0.060)	
cGDP (10^3)	-0.133**	-0.032	-0.180*	-0.193	-0.125**	-0.326*
	(0.045)	(0.089)	(0.078)	(0.180)	(0.039)	(0.129)
Eng. language	0.513		0.610†		1.296***	
	(0.339)		(0.356)		(0.371)	
Constant	-0.204	0.018	0.225	0.965	-0.713	4.805**
	(0.853)	(0.616)	(0.730)	(0.978)	(0.904)	(1.807)
N	2164	817	1856	521	1547	354
χ^2	263.092	11.419	179.348	46.056	140.636	34.434

Notes: Robust standard errors are used for population weighted models, bootstrapped standard errors for FE specifications. *Anocracy* is omitted due to multicollinearity, *Bil. trade* in (4) so that the ML function is concave and can be maximized. †$p < 0.10$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

5 Conclusion

In this paper we briefly explored the nascent 'going out' of Chinese NGOs. For one, they have internationalized operations in response to humanitarian crisis such as the Nepalese earthquake and more recently the Covid-19 pandemic. As was the case for the Amity foundation in Kenya, at other times 'going out' has been explicitly encouraged by Chinese government funding as part of the BRI. considering their intertwined relationship, we find that overall NGO projects abroad have trailed the relative priorities of official government engagement and lending. This political motivations complement the economics of scale and funding technologies explanations of NGO internationalization that the theory by Aldashev and Verdier, 2009 predicts. In addition, we show that Chinese NGOs tend to locate in countries that are relatively poor but growing rapidly, have socialist political orientations, and are geographically close to Beijing. Considering their resource and human capital constraints, self-serving factors have thereby played a comparatively outsized role over political or altruistic determinants.

Several caveats remain in our study, however:

(1) The use of country-level data does not permit us to make judgements on the sub-national locations of Chinese NGOs. Further research may for instance explore whether Chinese NGOs locate in proximity of international BRI projects. If so, are their operations easing some of the initiative's environmental and social repercussions in comparison to projects where none are present?

(2) In part due to the limited sample size, this study has defined NGOs and what a project entails rather widely. Their aggregate number may therefore inaccurately reflect the relative size of the engagement, as a larger number of smaller projects (NGOs) are weighted more heavily. Since smaller NGOs disproportionately choose closer locations, this idea is evidenced by a strongly negative impact of geographic distance on NGO projects, while it is insignificant for government projects [see (1a) in Table (7)].

(3) Ultimately, simply because an organisation locates in a specific area does not per se mean

that its operations are effective. More research is needed to better understand the relationship between non-traditional (Chinese) NGO and official work more broadly and development outcomes on the ground.

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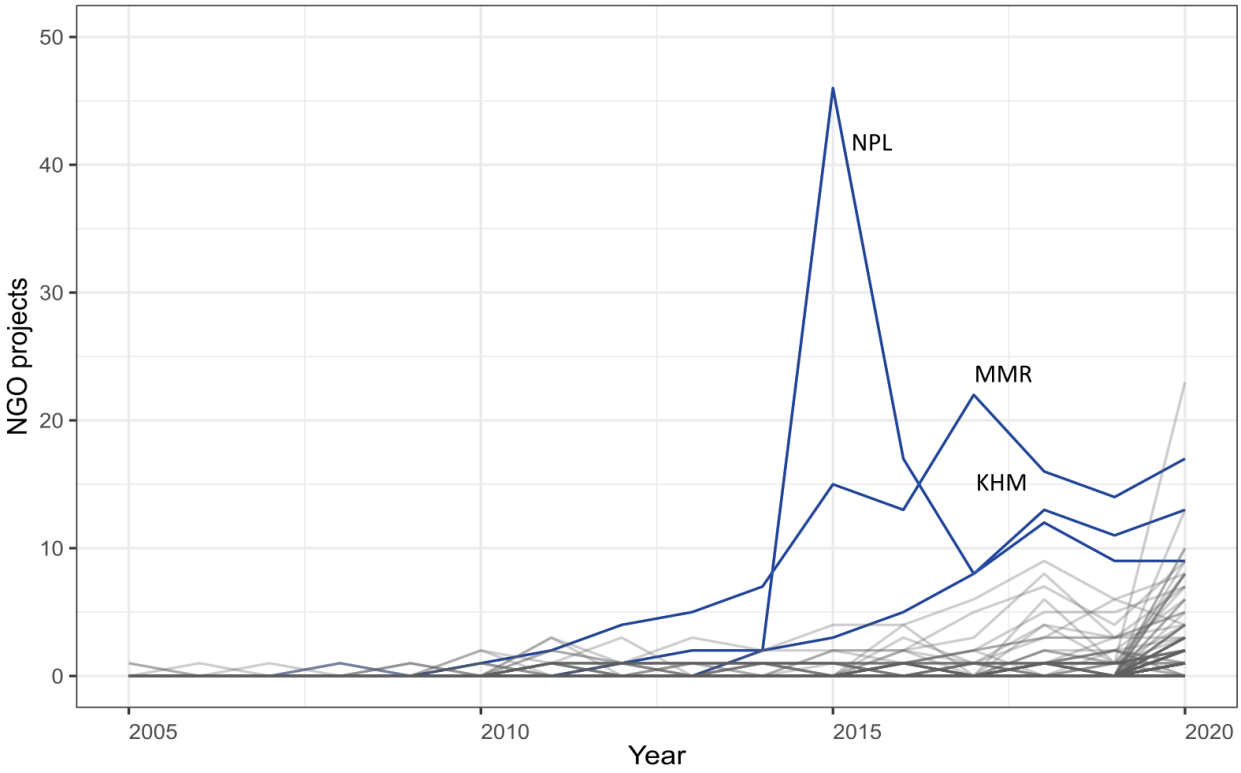
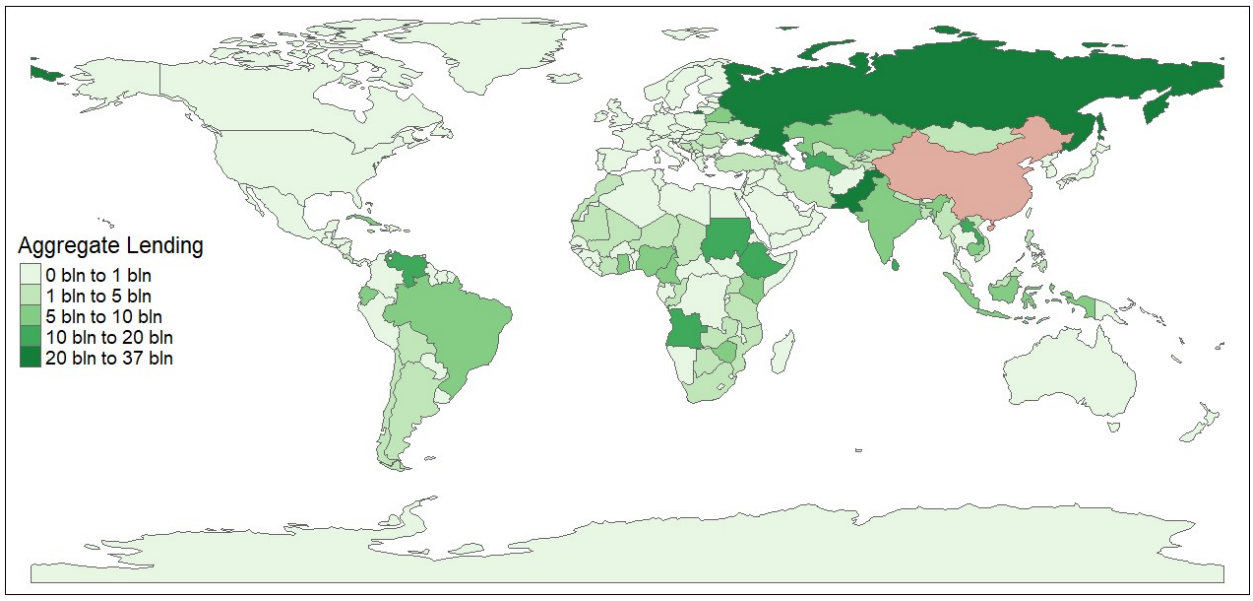
Figures

Figure 2: NGO projects per country 2005 - 2020



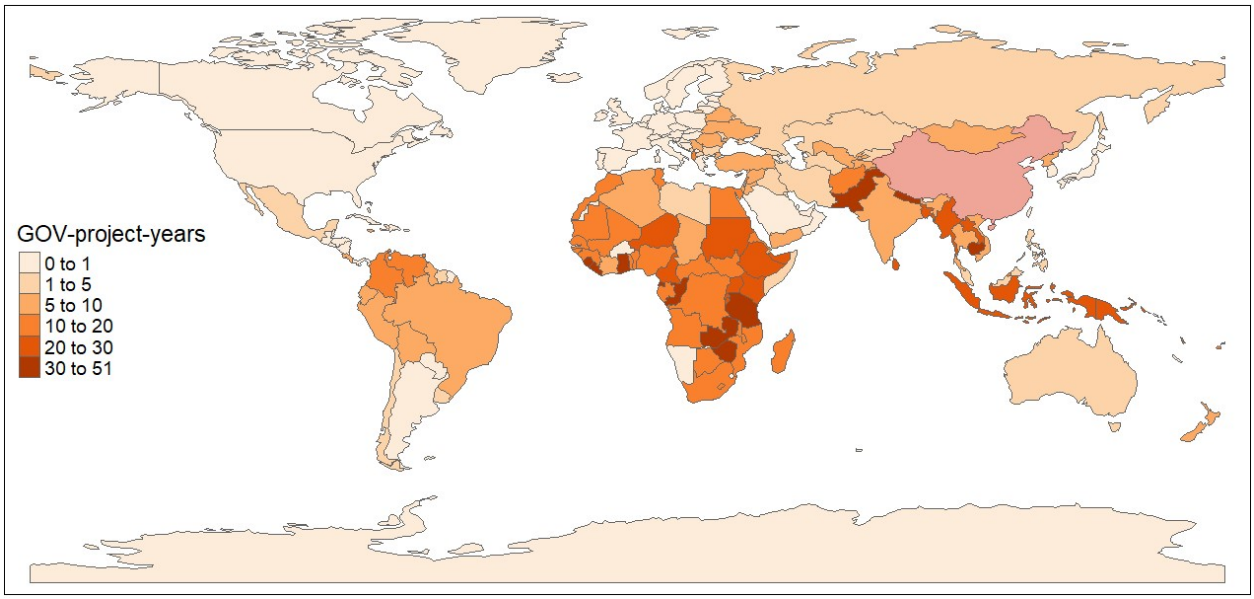
Notes: Idiosyncratic increases in 2020 resulted exclusively from Covid-19 related donations. The projects in Nepal, Myanmar, and Cambodia are marked in blue. Data: Wang, 2020.

Figure 3: Global Chinese governmental loans



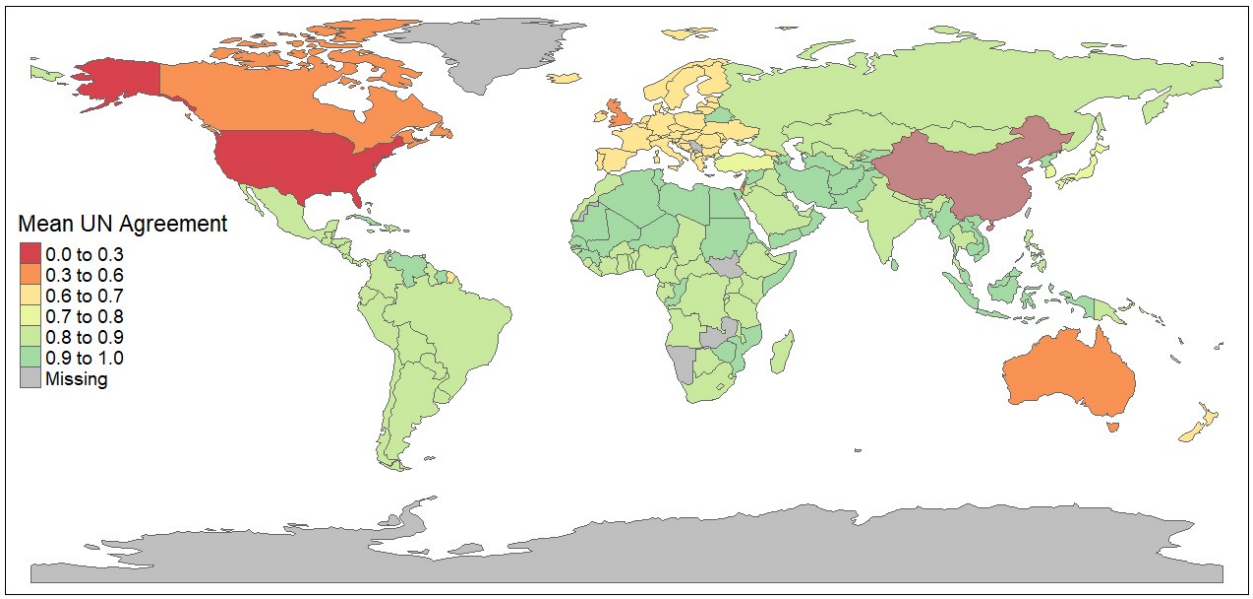
Notes: Aggregate country-level official Chinese lending 2000-2014 in $US billion. The aggregate preference for Russia originates from several large resource-related financing flows. For example, in 2009 the China Development Bank issued $US25 billion in loans to Russian companies for supplies of oil and related infrastructure. Data: Dreher et al., 2021.

Figure 4: Government initiated (development) projects



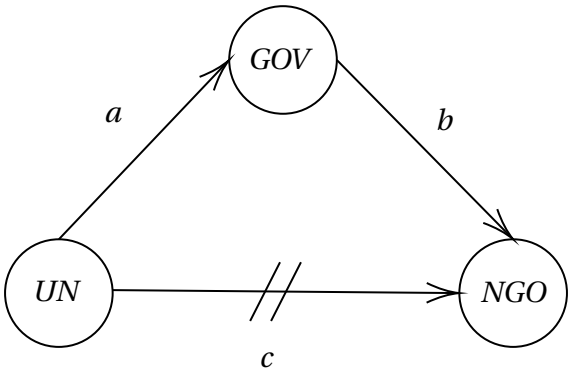
Notes: Aggregate country-level Chinese development projects. These include, among others, medical or professional training, technological transfer, construction of public infrastructure, donations of equipment, and openings of culture or language centers. Authors' calculations based on Dreher et al., 2021.

Figure 5: Agreement with China in UN general assembly



Notes: Average agreement ratio with China in UN general assembly roll-calls from 2000-2020. UN Data: Voeten et al., 2009.

Figure 6: Mediator relationship



Notes: Mediator relationship of Governmental development projects and political alignment vis-à-vis China, similar to the conceptual framework by Baron and Kenny, 1986. The edges *a*, *b*, and *c* correspond to regressions in Table (7).

Tables

Table 7: Mediator relationship

	GOV		*NGO projects*			
	PA	FE	PA	FE	PA	FE
	(1a)	(2a)	(3b)	(4b)	(5c)	(6c)
$UN\ agree_{t-3}$	**0.012*** **	**0.011*** **			**-0.032*** **	**-0.034*** **
	(0.003)	(0.002)			(0.008)	(0.010)
GOV_{t-3}			**0.201** **	**0.128***	0.187*	0.087
			(0.069)	(0.063)	(0.080)	(0.060)
$Polity_{t-3}$	0.002	0.027			0.011	0.142**
	(0.015)	(0.020)			(0.051)	(0.047)
Socialism	0.422*		1.248***		1.202**	
	(0.169)		(0.367)		(0.386)	
Bil. Trade (10^9)	0.001	0.005	0.013**	0.067†	0.009	0.041
	(0.002)	(0.007)	(0.004)	(0.038)	(0.006)	(0.032)
Distance (10^3)	0.017		-0.254***		-0.309***	
	(0.023)		(0.057)		(0.076)	
cGDP (10^3)	-0.057***	0.102	-0.129**	1.296†	-0.129*	0.895
	(0.015)	(0.090)	(0.040)	(0.770)	(0.053)	(0.691)
Eng. language	0.842***		0.373		0.547	
	(0.145)		(0.702)		(0.843)	
Constant	-1.330***		-0.752		1.768†	
	(0.358)		(0.501)		(0.970)	
N	1839	1232	2518	645	1995	600
χ^2	120.146	37.975	86.642	12.897	86.236	61.744

Notes: Robust standard errors in parenthesis. Lagged agreement scores are associated with higher governmental engagement (*a*), lagged *GOV* is in turn correlated with more NGO projects (*b*). Controlling for *GOV*, lagged relative alignment *UN agree* however does not predict more projects (*c*). † $p < 0.10$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Table 8: List of countries

Country	*ISO3*	*Country*	*ISO3*
Aruba	ABW	Djibouti	DJI
Afghanistan	**AFG**	Dominica	DMA
Angola	**AGO**	Denmark	DNK
Albania	**ALB**	Dominican Republic	DOM
Andorra	AND	**Algeria**	**DZA**
United Arab Emirates	ARE	Ecuador	ECU
Argentina	ARG	**Egypt, Arab Rep.**	**EGY**
Armenia	ARM	**Eritrea**	**ERI**
American Samoa	ASM	Spain	ESP
Antigua & Barbuda	ATG	Estonia	EST
Australia	AUS	**Ethiopia**	**ETH**
Austria	AUT	Finland	FIN
Azerbaijan	AZE	Fiji	FJI
Burundi	BDI	France	FRA
Belgium	BEL	Faroe Islands	FRO
Benin	**BEN**	Micronesia, Fed. Sts.	FSM
Burkina Faso	BFA	Gabon	GAB
Bangladesh	**BGD**	United Kingdom	GBR
Bulgaria	**BGR**	Georgia	GEO
Bahrain	BHR	**Ghana**	**GHA**
Bahamas	BHS	Gibraltar	GIB
Bosnia and Herzegovina	**BIH**	**Guinea**	**GIN**
Belarus	**BLR**	Gambia	GMB
Belize	BLZ	**Guinea-Bissau**	**GNB**
Bermuda	BMU	Equatorial Guinea	GNQ
Bolivia	**BOL**	Greece	GRC
Brazil	BRA	**Grenada**	**GRD**
Barbados	BRB	Greenland	GRL
Brunei	BRN	Guatemala	GTM
Bhutan	BTN	Guam	GUM
Botswana	BWA	**Guyana**	**GUY**
Central African Rep.	CAF	Hong Kong SAR, China	HKG
Canada	CAN	Honduras	HND
Switzerland	CHE	**Croatia**	**HRV**
Channel Islands	CHI	Haiti	HTI
Chile	CHL	**Hungary**	**HUN**
China	CHN	**Indonesia**	**IDN**
Cote D'Ivoire	CIV	Isle of Man	IMN
Cameroon	CMR	**India**	**IND**
Congo, Dem. Rep.	**COD**	Ireland	IRL
Congo, Rep.	**COG**	Iran, Islamic Rep.	IRN
Colombia	COL	**Iraq**	**IRQ**
Comoros	COM	Iceland	ISL
Cape Verde	**CPV**	Israel	ISR
Costa Rica	CRI	Italy	ITA
Cuba	CUB	Jamaica	JAM
Curacao	CUW	Jordan	JOR
Cayman Islands	CYM	Japan	JPN
Cyprus	CYP	Kazakhstan	KAZ
Czech Republic	**CZE**	**Kenya**	**KEN**
Germany	**DEU**	Kyrgyz Republic	KGZ

Cambodia	**KHM**	**Poland**	**POL**
Kiribati	KIR	Puerto Rico	PRI
St. Kitts and Nevis	KNA	**Korea, Dem. People's Rep.**	**PRK**
Korea, Rep.	KOR	**Portugal**	**PRT**
Kuwait	KWT	Paraguay	PRY
Laos	**LAO**	West Bank and Gaza	PSE
Lebanon	LBN	French Polynesia	PYF
Liberia	LBR	Qatar	QAT
Libya	**LBY**	**Romania**	**ROU**
St. Lucia	LCA	**Russia**	**RUS**
Liechtenstein	LIE	Rwanda	RWA
Sri Lanka	**LKA**	Saudi Arabia	SAU
Lesotho	LSO	**Sudan**	**SDN**
Lithuania	LTU	**Senegal**	**SEN**
Luxembourg	LUX	Singapore	SGP
Latvia	LVA	Solomon Islands	SLB
Macao SAR, China	MAC	**Sierra Leone**	**SLE**
St. Martin (French part)	MAF	El Salvador	SLV
Morocco	MAR	San Marino	SMR
Monaco	MCO	**Somalia**	**SOM**
Moldova	MDA	**Serbia**	**SRB**
Madagascar	**MDG**	**South Sudan**	**SSD**
Maldives	MDV	Sao Tome and Principe	STP
Mexico	MEX	Suriname	SUR
Marshall Islands	MHL	**Slovak Republic**	**SVK**
Macedonia, FYR	MKD	**Slovenia**	**SVN**
Mali	**MLI**	Sweden	SWE
Malta	MLT	Eswatini	SWZ
Myanmar	**MMR**	Sint Maarten (Dutch part)	SXM
Montenegro	MNE	**Seychelles**	**SYC**
Mongolia	**MNG**	**Syria**	**SYR**
Northern Mariana Islands	MNP	Turks and Caicos Islands	TCA
Mozambique	**MOZ**	**Chad**	**TCD**
Mauritania	MRT	Togo	TGO
Mauritius	MUS	Thailand	THA
Malawi	MWI	Tajikistan	TJK
Malaysia	MYS	Turkmenistan	TKM
Namibia	NAM	Timor-Leste	TLS
New Caledonia	NCL	Tonga	TON
Niger	NER	Trinidad & Tobago	TTO
Nigeria	NGA	**Tunisia**	**TUN**
Nicaragua	**NIC**	Turkey	TUR
Niue	NIU	**Tuvalu**	**TUV**
Netherlands	NLD	Taiwan	TWN
Norway	NOR	**Tanzania**	**TZA**
Nepal	**NPL**	Uganda	UGA
Nauru	NRU	**Ukraine**	**UKR**
New Zealand	NZL	Kosovo	UNK
Oman	OMN	United States	USA
Pakistan	PAK	Uzbekistan	UZB
Panama	PAN	St. Vincent and the Grenadines	VCT
Peru	PER	Venezuela	VEN
Philippines	PHL	British Virgin Islands	VGB
Palau	PLW	Virgin Islands (U.S.)	VIR

Papua New Guinea	PNG	**Viet Nam**	**VNM**
Vanuatu	VUT	Serbia	YUG
Samoa	WSM	South Africa	ZAF
Kosovo	XKX	**Zambia**	**ZMB**
Yemen	**YEM**	Zimbabwe	ZWE

Notes: Countries with socialist/Marxist-Leninist past or those with constitutional references to socialism are marked in bold.