

# Developmental Regimes in Africa

initiating & sustaining developmental regimes in Africa

## SYNTHESIS REPORT

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# SUMMARY

Over the past 20 years, many African countries have experienced sustained economic growth. Few, however, have embarked on the kind of structural change, driven by rising productivity in key sectors, that has been responsible for transforming mass living standards in parts of Asia. The Developmental Regimes in Africa (DRA) project has been investigating the causes and implications of this worrying scenario, building on the findings of previous research by the Tracking Development project (TD) and the Africa Power and Politics Programme (APPP). Exploiting further the systematic comparative methods used by TD and APPP, **DRA research has shed new light on how developmental regimes might emerge and be sustained in Africa in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.**

TD found that policy differences – especially different priorities with respect to agriculture and rural development – lie behind the strikingly different development outcomes in sub-Saharan Africa and Southeast Asia over the last half-century. **TD and APPP converged in showing that differences in outcomes across countries are not related to different levels of compliance with standard criteria of good governance** – contradicting an assumption that is still widely promoted by international development agencies. The differences among regimes that are relevant to explaining development performance are to be found at a deeper level. They cut across conventional distinctions between democratic and non-democratic, or more and less ‘patrimonial’, types.

**These convergent conclusions left several questions unanswered.** Based on Southeast Asian experience, where are developmental regimes most likely to come from in Africa? What will ensure that in the future, unlike the past in Africa, high-growth regimes are able to be sustained beyond the term of a single political leader? What are the prospects for creating ‘pockets of effectiveness’ in areas of public policy that matter to smallholder farmers? What, therefore, should be considered the distinguishing features of a developmental regime in Africa today? In what ways does the international system influence the prospects for establishing and sustaining such regimes? What are the implications, for African policy actors and for the international community?

Our findings on regime origins add weight to the TD proposition that the policy priorities and choices of the political leadership are the key explanatory variable. They also refute the influential theory that these choices have their origin in ‘systemic vulnerability’, where pro-poor, pro-rural policies are seen as a direct response to political threats from the rural masses. The important implication for international policy is that there are few more important tasks than challenging, in an evidence-based way, the assumptions that African policy-makers typically make about how development progress occurs. **We should not be waiting for an exogenous shock to change the ideas of the continent’s politicians and policy elites.**

Sustainability is a challenge, even for economic growth. Leaving aside the vulnerability of the current African growth to changes in China, the historical evidence shows that relatively extended phases of economic progress have often started under exceptional political leaders and ended with their death or declining capabilities. Our findings, based on comparative analysis of Southeast Asian and African experiences, suggest that the key to leadership transitions that do not interrupt economic growth is the presence of one or other of two sorts of strong institution: a governing party with a tradition of consensual decision-making or, in the special case of Thailand, a state bureaucracy that can insulate policy from changes in political leadership. Therefore, **the proposition that successful development depends on having the right institutions is correct, but the typical formulation is misleading.** The version that emphasises liberal-democratic norms or ‘inclusive institutions’ is not supported by this analysis or by the wider literature.

Pockets of effectiveness, where politicians, officials and private actors interact in a benign way to support productivity gains in a particular sector of the economy, are not completely absent in contemporary Africa. However, they are rare or short-lived in sub-sectors of agriculture that are important to large numbers of smallholders, in sharp contrast with historical experience in Southeast Asia. Nevertheless, research by DRA and a team at the University of Leiden has identified many areas of crop and livestock production that have registered respectable improvements in production and yields over recent years. This finding suggests **the potential for ‘innovation clusters’ that stimulate productive liaisons between farmers, market and credit agencies and knowledge centres**, without the necessity of heavy government involvement.

Comparative evidence from Asia as well as about the variety of African development experiences, past and present, suggests a new way of conceptualising a developmental regime. **There is no longer a need to rely on ‘developmental state’ concepts that draw narrowly on lessons from East Asia.** DRA analysis suggests a concept with defining features at three levels: *policy content*, especially regarding agriculture; *policy process*, especially the ability to arrive at appropriate policies through iterative and adaptive problem-solving; and a type of *political settlement* that frees policy-making from the usual constraints. This concept, which goes beyond definition to include claims about causal linkages, is offered as a hypothesis for further testing.

**If developmental regimes are distinguished at these three levels, there are important implications for international policy.** We find that literature on the ‘policy space’ for developing countries may exaggerate the effects of international agreements and conditionalities on the choices available to African leaders. Recent contributions on the role of aid in inhibiting problem-driven policy-making are relevant but incomplete. A vital but still unexplored question is how the exercise of influence by international powers with a liberal-democratic ideological agenda can discourage or undermine viable settlements with the potential to sustain developmental regimes.

The DRA findings as a whole provide additional reasons for raising the quality of development policy debate in Africa, making use of the compelling evidence provided by TD. They add force to recent calls for both governments and international agencies to ‘do development differently’ by embracing policy methods based on problem-solving and learning by trial and error. Finally, they suggest the need to join up evidence on better ways of working for development with a systematic approach to varieties of country context, using the concept of political settlement. **Further efforts are needed to carry these three conclusions into the most influential policy communities.**



Overview of Addis Ababa, Ethiopia  
Arne Hoel / The World Bank

# Overview

David Booth

## 1.1 The DRA project

In 2012, two large research programmes reported final results that shed new light on fundamental questions about the past and future development of Africa. Tracking Development (TD), an international collaboration led from Leiden University in the Netherlands, published the most systematic study yet undertaken of the comparative development experience of sub-Saharan Africa and Southeast Asia since 1960. The Africa Power and Politics Programme (APPP) reported findings from a large comparative enquiry into the politics of economic performance and public goods delivery across African countries. Since 2012, researchers from TD and APPP have been collaborating in a new project on Initiating and Sustaining Developmental Regimes in Africa (the DRA Project).

The TD and APPP findings agreed in challenging an international policy consensus on Africa that has treated departures from global standards of ‘good governance’ as the key to Africa’s comparatively weak long-term development record. The two programmes showed that policy choices and institutional differences other than those emphasised in ‘good governance’ theory need much greater emphasis than they get in mainstream policy. However, this convergence left a number of questions unanswered and several policy puzzles to be resolved. Further evidence was needed if a completely coherent alternative story was to be presented. Since 2012, the DRA Project has been addressing these questions and puzzles and publishing the results on a joint website ([www.institutions-africa.org](http://www.institutions-africa.org)). This report summarises and discusses the project’s main findings.

Over three years, the DRA Project produced eight original working papers and six policy briefs. Project associates made presentations to policy-engagement meetings in Africa, Asia, Europe and the USA. The series of policy briefs opened with restatements and reflections on the complementary findings of the two predecessor projects, TD and APPP. The working papers and the related briefs, blogs and oral contributions addressed four outstanding questions identified at the outset to guide the fresh research. The six policy briefs of the complete series are reproduced without substantive change as Chapters 1-5 and 8 of this report. Chapter 7 is a new contribution, providing an otherwise missing link. This Overview places the research in a broader context, guides the reader through the main findings and adds some further reflections on the implications of this body of work as a whole.

## 1.2 The unresolved questions

At the end of 2014, there is a justified mood of optimism about development in Africa. Over the 2000s, average annual GDP growth for Africa as a whole was 4.7%, rising from 2.7% in the 1990s. Numerous countries from the sub-Saharan region participated in this growth, with several posting output expansion well in excess of population growth (ECA and AU, 2014). While in most countries social conditions for the bulk of the population are still improving slowly at best, visible signs of private wealth and commercial prosperity are increasingly apparent. These indicators of economic turnaround have given grounds for hope that, at last, sub-Saharan Africa is about to join the club of successfully developing regions. However, specialists worry at the very low employment-intensity of current growth, and the associated weakness of impacts on poverty. Increasingly, these concerns are articulated in the proposition that African economies are getting growth but not structural change or the accumulation of new productive capabilities.

In all of these respects and more, the most telling evidence that things are not yet going Africa's way comes from the TD project. Chapter 2 below provides an outline of how the TD research interrogated the long-term development divergence between Southeast Asia and sub-Saharan Africa, and the conclusions to which it was drawn. Readers wanting a fuller exposition can now be directed to a popular outline (Vlasblom, 2013), a journal special issue (Van Donge and Henley, 2012a), a compendium of articles (Berendsen et al., 2013) and a comprehensive final monograph (Henley, 2015).

The TD conclusions centre on the critical failure of African countries to complement their recent achievements in the areas of macro-economic management and market liberalisation with the investments in smallholder agriculture and rural infrastructure that have been the foundation of Southeast Asian development success. There is a very clear policy implication. African governments should be encouraged to promote pro-poor agricultural productivity growth as the essential first step towards all-round development. They should be discouraged from imagining that it is possible to build successful manufacturing sectors or service economies without the foundation of a productive rural economy. A significant danger arising from some of the current rhetoric about Africa's growth recovery is that it will fuel new illusions of this sort, with African leaders emulating models of Asian development success that bear little relation to the true story.

The TD project has made a significant contribution to policy-relevant knowledge by bringing policy, and policy choices regarding agriculture in particular, back to centre-stage. As the TD team has emphasised, the reason Southeast Asian countries succeeded where comparable African countries failed was not that they had, in conventional terms, better governance. However, this finding refutes the good-governance orthodoxy but does not imply that governance or political-economy variables have no place in explaining differences in outcomes. As argued in Chapter 3, the implication is rather that the relevant variables need to be looked for in places that the conventional thinking does not reach.

TD itself identified some common features of Southeast Asian political priorities that help to explain the policy packages that were adopted, and in turn invite explanation in political economy terms. Malaysia, Indonesia and Vietnam focused effectively on raising the productivity of smallholder agriculture because their rulers had a policy orientation emphasising 'outreach', 'urgency' and 'expediency'. They wanted material benefits to extend to the maximum populations, as fast as possible and by any means necessary. In most cases, this orientation was translated into policy and implementation by creating new agencies with a strong politically protected mandate that enabled them to be islands of effectiveness in an otherwise untransformed bureaucratic landscape.

These findings pose obviously important questions. Where did the policy orientation expressed as 'outreach, urgency and expediency' come from? Why has it not been present in a similar number of African countries? What is the potential for it to come into existence in Africa in the future?

The APPP results are relevant to handling questions such as these. According to APPP's comparative analysis of African experience (Kelsall, 2013a), the major observed divergences in development outcomes – which are by no means insignificant across countries and time-periods – cannot be explained in terms of differences in formal institutional or constitutional arrangements, especially not in terms of standard indicators of the quality of democracy. The assumption that political systems become less patrimonial or corrupt as multi-party electoral systems are established is not supported by comparative evidence. Rather, the differences that seem to matter most for sustained development cut across the dictatorship/democracy divide. They are about the different forms that neopatrimonial politics can assume at a deeper level than the formal constitution. Often they have to do with the ability or inability of elites and other stakeholders to overcome barriers to progressive collective action (Booth, 2012; Booth and Cammack, 2013).

“ *African economies are getting growth but not structural change.* ”

The combined effect of these arguments from TD and APPP has been to raise rather sharply five sets of questions concerning the following topics:

1. The political **origins** of the outreach, urgency and expediency that TD found to be a common feature of the policy orientation of Southeast Asian developmental regimes. This is a crucial question for determining where a more transformative type of political regime might be expected to come from in the current African context.
2. The main institutional features favouring the **sustainability** of development effort, once established under a more or less developmental type of neopatrimonial political regime in Africa or Asia. This question picks up the concern that African growth episodes have often been curtailed by problems of leadership succession.
3. The role likely to be played under any potentially developmental African regimes by politically protected **islands of excellence, or pockets of effectiveness**, of the sort that were important in Southeast Asia's agriculture-led development breakthroughs.
4. The implications of recent research findings for a **conceptualisation** of developmental regimes that is fit for purpose in the 21st century in Africa. This new research question was added to the original four, to draw together some emerging conclusions.
5. The potential contribution, for better or worse, of the **international system** to the emergence and sustainability of developmental regimes so defined. This was, and remains, a crucial question in determining the policy implications for international actors.

### 1.3 Origins of developmental regimes

Chapter 4 and the associated working papers (Fuady, 2013; Henley, 2013) address this issue by entering into a dialogue with one of the most influential political economy arguments in comparative Asian studies. This is known as the 'systemic vulnerability' thesis.

In its strong form (Weiss and Hobson, 1995; Doner et al., 2005), the vulnerability thesis is offered to explain the exceptionally strong state-building and industrialisation ambitions of South Korea, Taiwan and Singapore. In this argument, elites of these three countries faced a combination of restive popular classes, extreme geopolitical insecurity and severe resource constraints. This particular set of challenges was not present in other fast-growing eastern Asian states, including Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines and Thailand – which helps to explain their relatively modest industrial achievements. In a weaker form, however, the argument about elite vulnerability to threats from mobilised or potentially mobilisable masses, especially in rural areas, is often offered as the central element in explaining the differences in development performance among members of the latter group, now including Vietnam (Campos and Root, 1996; Slater, 2010; Vu, 2010).

Political economy explanations of this type challenge one of the principal claims made on the basis of the TD research. This says that the influence of different policy ideas is the key factor explaining why Southeast Asian countries such as Indonesia, Malaysia and Vietnam achieved so much more in the 50 years from 1960 than their African counterparts, Nigeria, Kenya and Tanzania. But if the choice of a pro-poor rural development path was an elite response to the threat of rural uprisings, the threat factor becomes the theoretically interesting part of the story. Indeed, Africanists looking at the ability of country elites to overcome their fragmentation and act collectively in ways that favour inclusive processes of national development have often been led to focus on the near absence of class-based rural threats in Africa (Bates, 1981; Lewis, 2007). The exceptions in Africa, states like Ethiopia and Rwanda whose leaders are forcing the pace of national and rural development, appear consistent with the view that an acute rural threat to the future of the elite in power is a key explanatory factor (Kelsall, 2013a; Poulton, 2014).

The DRA research summarised in Chapter 4, however, provides a compelling rebuttal of the rural threat thesis as applied to Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand and Vietnam. The historical circumstances surrounding the adoption of inclusive development policies in these countries do not fit the predictions of this theory. Close examination of the differences in policy orientations between Southeast Asian and comparable African countries does not support the notion that leaders had fundamentally different political interests. Rather, it reinforces the observation that they conceived development progress in different ways. The most significant differences in elite mind-sets had historical roots, but not of the sort emphasised in the vulnerability/threat literature. The leaders of independent Africa have tended to conceive development as a comprehensive transformation, a quantum leap from rural backwardness to urban modernity. Distinctive features of the

colonial experience, the origins of urban life and the process of decolonisation in Africa help to account for why leaders acquired these attitudes and assumptions. Southeast Asian leaders learned a different set of fundamental assumptions about development, which led them to adopt different, and better, policies.

The argument of Chapter 4 provides a powerful set of reasons for not leaning too heavily on political economy in analysing policy choices and regime orientations in developing countries, a position that is increasingly adopted even by distinguished practitioners of political economy analysis (Rodrik, 2014). Indeed, in analysing agricultural policy choices in Africa there may now be value in a three-layered perspective, including realism about political interests, relevant policy ideas and scope for innovative ('politically smart and locally led') methods for securing key reforms (Booth, 2014b; Booth and Unsworth, 2014).

APPP and DRA research on the Rwandan 'exception' agrees with this. Contrary to what would be predicted by the rural threat thesis, the post-genocide Rwandan government took at least ten years to agree a development strategy that gave a central place to raising the productivity of smallholder agriculture. The regime certainly faces a powerful combination of external and internal threats, which does influence policy. But the agricultural transformation policy that now prevails was the outcome of a difficult learning process prompted by a food crisis and alarming poverty incidence statistics in the mid-2000s (Booth and Golooba-Mutebi, 2014a). As discussed later in this report, the ability of the Rwandan regime, and the dominant party in the ruling coalition, to learn from experience may be a more important element in its 'developmental' credentials than has been suggested in the country literature.

These conclusions are somewhat reassuring in the context of any discussion of the prospects for developmental regimes in Africa. As Henley and Fuady point out in Chapter 4, threats of the kind that helped to inspire pro-poor policies in Asia could not be replicated in Africa today, even if this were considered desirable. In most other respects too, history has to be treated as a given. On the other hand, African experience since the 1980s is quite encouraging about the prospects of policy change supported, if not initiated, by a real intellectual conversion among political elites. If leaders can be convinced of the virtues of sound macro-economic management and relatively free markets, why should they not be convinced of the merits of agriculture-led development? This may be easier to achieve if, as in the Rwandan case, the dominant political organisation is predisposed to learning-by-doing, but politically smart reform entrepreneurs may be able to achieve worthwhile shifts in policy even when this condition is lacking, as it almost certainly is in the rest of East Africa (Booth et al., 2014).

## 1.4 The sustainability issue

In order to get empirical leverage on the sustainability question, Chapter 5 and the longer paper on which it is based (Kelsall, 2013b) approach it indirectly. The question of what should count as a developmental regime in the current African context is not addressed in this report until Chapter 7. In any case, the answers given are difficult to operationalise, partly because of the shortage of extant examples of regimes that correspond to the concept. For the time being, at least, it is necessary to work with proxy measures that capture aspects of the broader issue, using the data that can be assembled on the features and performance of actually existing regimes. Chapter 5 therefore focuses on the conditions that allow economic growth processes to be sustained despite a change in the top political leadership.

The starting point of this enquiry is the finding from APPP research (Kelsall, 2013a) that the current, relatively extended period of fast economic growth in sub-Saharan Africa is not completely unprecedented. According to the best economic studies (Ndulu et al., 2008), the region's economies grew at a respectable rate between

1960 and 1974, with some countries posting extremely rapid rates of growth. The circumstances that brought the most impressive of these processes to an end often included a flawed leadership succession. In Côte d'Ivoire, Kenya and Malawi and possibly other countries, considerable economic and social progress under the country's first post-colonial regime came to an end following the death or waning capacities of the leader. Leadership successions were managed in a way that eroded rather than sustaining the conditions for growth. Could it have been different and what are the implications for today?



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The study by Tim Kelsall summarised in Chapter 5 addressed this question by means of a qualitative comparative analysis of sub-Saharan African and Southeast Asian states that experienced both high growth episodes and leadership successions at some point between 1960 and 2010. The universe of such cases, after some carefully justified exclusions, is just ten episodes in ten countries, five in Asia and five in Africa. In six cases the growth process survived the succession while in four it did not. The study then used comparative analysis and historical ‘process tracing’ on the individual cases to tease out the relevant explanatory factors.

“ *the analysis finds no support for globally influential claims about the positive contribution of inclusive institutions or a ‘golden thread’.* ”

Adding weight to the APPP and TD findings, the analysis finds no support for globally influential claims about the positive contribution of inclusive institutions or a ‘golden thread’ linking rule of law, absence of conflict and corruption, and strong formal property rights. A number of contributory factors seemed important in some cases and not others. However, the combination of factors that was present in all six successful episodes and absent in all four unsuccessful ones contained just three elements. They were an intermediate level of ‘systemic vulnerability’ (the concept critiqued in Chapter 4), a broadly market-friendly policy approach, and a policy-making process embedded in one or other of two types of strong institution: a political party with a tradition of consensual decision-making and leadership succession; and a strong, organic state bureaucracy with the ability to insulate policy from changes in political leadership. In fact, the second institutional variant applies only to Thailand (1961–98), suggesting that the institutional character of the dominant party is the most generally relevant issue in Africa today.

The APPP and TD findings on the importance of policy and institutional factors other than political democracy, the rule of law or citizen demand for better government make many people uncomfortable. These findings clash with many firmly held convictions and values, so that a typical response is to accuse the authors of being indifferent to the civil and political rights of poor people or overly persuaded by the propaganda of dictatorial regimes. However, Chapter 5 adds fresh evidence that we need to be thinking in unconventional ways about political regimes and development outcomes, especially if we are seriously concerned about the rights of poor people. In more recent work, the author of Chapter 5 has undertaken a systematic review of the literature on the controversial relationships between authoritarianism, democracy and development (Kelsall, 2014). On this broader canvas, the final conclusion is the same. The factors most consistently favouring development outcomes cut across the distinction between more or less democratic and more or less authoritarian regimes.

## **1.5 Pockets of effectiveness**

The interest of the DRA project in pockets of state effectiveness arises from the observation that the results achieved by regimes that have come to be regarded as ‘developmental states’ have been, more often than not, the work of specific public agencies operating to good effect within an otherwise unfavourable institutional environment. This was the case in Northeast Asia, as documented in the first generation of literature inspired by Johnson’s study of MITI in Japan (Johnson, 1982; 1999). It was an important feature of the Southeast Asian successes examined in detail by the TD project, with the difference that the empowered and effective agencies included those with responsibility for rural development or agriculture. In the African literature, too, a topic that has been well explored by a handful of authors is the disproportionate role played in the fortunes of some countries by the rise and fall of particular organisations that benefited, for a while, from the combination of excellent management and political protection (Leonard, 1991; Crook, 2010).

Interest in this topic has increased recently, thanks in part to the number of documented cases of national revenue authorities and other specialised agencies establishing themselves as islands of efficiency within highly patrimonial settings (Robinson, 2007; Leonard, 2010; Roll, 2014b; 2014a). A key issue not addressed so far, partly no doubt because of the shortage of contemporary examples, is the feasibility in current political contexts of pockets of effectiveness of direct interest to smallholder farmers. The crop parastatals of the Jomo Kenyatta era in Kenya that were the focus of Leonard’s 1991 book were such organisations, but recent examples have been harder to find.

One important effort to fill this gap is the Elites, Production and Poverty (EPP) research project led by Ole Therkildsen (Whitfield and Therkildsen, 2011; Whitfield et al., forthcoming). Recognising that relationships between clientelistic politicians and producer groups vary across economic sectors and subsectors, this research found and documented a number of instances of a benign and supportive triangular relationship between political leaders, sector bureaucrats and business groups. In these instances, including the cocoa recovery in Ghana, sugar businesses in Mozambique and the dairy sector in Uganda, positive economic outcomes were the product of a perceived mutuality of interests among these three sets of players. The sector officials were characterised by something of the ‘embedded autonomy’ that Evans (1995) identified as the key to industrial policy in Korea. Other examples were found where results were disappointing because the triangular relationship between politicians, officials and producers did not exist or broke down. Examples included export horticulture in Ghana and irrigated rice in Tanzania.

The EPP case studies are certainly suggestive of what a pocket of effectiveness might look like in the current African context. However, with the single exception of cocoa in Ghana the documented success stories do not include sub-sectors that are key to the livelihoods of large numbers of smallholders. The documented disappointments and other experience in East Africa (Booth et al., 2014) serve to underline the general observation that the typical form of competitive clientelism in Africa today does not and perhaps cannot deliver the political protection that an effective agricultural transformation agency would require.

Chapter 6 takes a radical approach to this generally discouraging picture. The chapter and the set of four country reports on which it draws (Akinyoade et al., 2013; Leliveld et al., 2013a; Leliveld et al., 2013b; Dietz et al., 2014) examine the available evidence on progress in particular sub-sectors of crop and livestock production. They set about identifying the sub-sectors in which worthwhile progress has been made over the years 2000-2010, leaving on one side the question of whether this is occurring because or in spite of the prevailing policy environment. The focus is on the four African countries in the TD set: Kenya, Nigeria, Tanzania and Uganda.

Making due allowance for weaknesses in the available data on outputs and yields, and applying a relatively relaxed set of success criteria, the study constructs a healthy list of sub-sectoral successes. The growth in urban populations and the resulting increased domestic demand for food is the main driver in most instances, with exports playing a small role. The study does not delve deeply into the political economy of these developments, except to note that few of them are mainly the result of government initiatives. On the other hand, the results provide the framework for an important set of further research questions covering such matters as: the nature of the value chain for a successful agricultural product; what combination of public and private support works best; the relative roles of domestic and international markets; and the incentives and disincentives underlying production and yield increases. The authors of Chapter 6 recommend support for innovation clusters that stimulate productive liaisons between farmers, market agencies, credit agencies and national and international knowledge centres.

## **1.6 A new concept of developmental regime**

It might be thought that a research project dedicated to questions about developmental regimes would begin by defining its subject of study. The DRA project did not do this, for several reasons that still seem sound.



*the typical form of competitive clientelism does not deliver the political protection that an effective agricultural transformation agency would require.*

Most importantly, the TD project rather emphatically failed to find that Southeast Asia’s development successes were the work of a particular type of political regime. Indonesia, Malaysia and Vietnam achieved comparable development outcomes under very different sorts of regime. What their governments shared was a pragmatic approach to an immediate problem – summarised in the phrase ‘urgency, outreach and expediency’. The change process was not driven by a bold vision for national economic transformation, but by a consistent incrementalism. As discussed in Chapter 4, ambitious visions for economic transformation were more often found in Africa, where they contributed to a policy climate that systematically avoided providing the needed support to agriculture.

The APPP research on ‘developmental patrimonialism’ did, in apparent contrast, give considerable importance to time horizons and vision. Comparing regimes across Africa, outcomes did seem to be better when the leadership’s policy horizon extended beyond the next election. In the African context, it seems to matter whether the leadership uses the available economic rents to further a vision of national development or merely to keep itself in power by buying the support of a sufficient elite coalition. The most important further question to be explored was how the growth accelerations produced by the economically more successful variants of neopatrimonialism could be sustained, the question dealt with in Chapter 5.



***a relevant concept of developmental regime must capture three layers of insight from recent research.***

It was a challenge to reconcile these different perspectives in a way that preserved their respective empirically grounded insights. This implied a wider and deeper engagement with comparative development studies on Asia, Africa and beyond, as well as further reflection on the conclusions of Chapters 4-6. Finally, what prompted the proposed conceptual synthesis was the need to address the project’s final research question, concerning the role of the international system. While the issue of sustainability could be illuminated using proxy measures, this question seemed to require the elaboration of a theoretical concept.

Chapter 7, and the longer paper on which it draws (Booth, 2014a), describes such a concept. The central idea is to break out of the rather circumscribed debate initiated in the 1980s in response to the first generation of Asian tiger economies. Based on the subsequent experience in both Asia and Africa, it now seems possible to offer a more generally applicable concept, involving three layers of defining features and a perspective on the causal connections among them. As with theoretical concepts in the social sciences generally (Goertz, 2006; Manicas, 2006; Coppedge, 2012), the proposal is not just a definition but a claim about the nature of the relevant causal mechanisms. It is offered as a source of hypotheses for testing.

The concept captures three layers of insight from recent research, about *policy content*, *policy process* and *political settlements*. Briefly stated, the argument is that policy choice matters, for the reasons adduced by TD; that the way in which policies are adopted and pursued matters even more; and that the ability of a regime to follow the needed problem-driven, iterative and adaptive policy approach is a function of the prevailing political settlement. Chapter 7 offers general reasons for conceiving a developmental regime in this three-layered way. Elsewhere (Golooba-Mutebi and Booth, 2013), we have illustrated its application to the case of Rwanda, arguing that the layered concept helps to make sense of aspects of the performance of a regime that remain puzzling within a normative governance-assessment lens (e.g., Reyntjens, 2013).

## **1.7 Influence of the international system**

The concept outlined in Chapter 7 is the template for the discussion in Chapter 8 and the associated working paper (Booth and Golooba-Mutebi, 2014b) of the way the international system and the policies of the global powers influence the prospects of developmental regimes in Africa today. Among the questions addressed by the DRA Project, this is perhaps of the most direct international policy relevance. Arguably, it is much more important than any question about what rich countries do as aid donors, since it is generally recognised that aid in itself has very little ability to shape the domestic politics of developing countries in helpful ways.

Since we have argued that the policies regimes choose are important, an obvious first topic for consideration is whether it is true that the ‘policy space’ for developing countries is now heavily restricted by the World Trade Organisation (WTO) agreements and the conditionalities of the Bretton Woods Institutions. Chapter 8 is broadly sympathetic to the literature that has advanced this idea (e.g., Gallagher, 2005) as well as to the general thesis that developed countries have a tendency to ‘kick away the ladder’ – in other words, to discourage use of the policies and institutions that they themselves used to climb to their current position (Chang, 2002). However, the hypothesis of severe constraints on policy choice is more persuasive when applied to already partly industrialised, middle-income economies than to the typical low-income country in Africa. Applied to Africa, the policy space hypothesis also assumes there is a genuine country interest in pursuing heterodox economic policy options to the point where WTO constraints or World Bank conditionalities kick in. We find this politically naïve.

One reason it is naïve is that policy processes in most of Africa do not have the quality that we have seen to be a feature of the otherwise varied regime types that have achieved exceptionally good development results. Policy is not usually arrived at in a problem-driven, iterative and adaptive way. This is for several reasons. As argued by Andrews and co-authors in advancing their PDIA concept (Pritchett et al., 2010; Andrews et al., 2013), the availability of development assistance works against a sound policy-making approach. The ‘isomorphic mimicry’ that has been observed as a general feature of organisational development everywhere is intensified by aid. The rulers of African countries tend to place a high value on maintaining good relations with donors and therefore policies and institutional arrangements are adopted that signal good intentions. International ‘best practices’ are adopted, formally at least, even though in practice they do not represent relevant solutions to the problems countries are facing.

These observations provide strong reasons for arguing that international factors constrain African countries more through their effects on the quality of policy processes than by limiting policy options. However, this should not be taken too far. Aid dependence does not seem to be a binding constraint, because at least in a handful of aid-dependent countries and in some sectors, policy is made PDIA-style despite the temptation of ‘signalling’. According to our argument, this happens because the political settlement allows it. Therefore, we need to be concerned also about how the international system, or forces within it, impact upon settlements that actually or potentially play this enabling role.

This last question is a difficult one that cries out for more research than the DRA project has been able to undertake. In Chapter 8, we take a few steps in the required direction, with a brief consideration of recent developments in the international relations of Kenya and Rwanda. We argue that these experiences give grounds for believing that international constraints on the emergence and consolidation of developmental regimes are most significant when they affect the enabling level of the political settlement.

By definition, political settlements are about institutions and power, especially about how the explicit or tacit agreements among elite factions – often defined in ethno-regional or faith-group terms – that affect the way institutions work in practice (Khan, 2010; Parks and Cole, 2010). Since the end of the Cold War, however, international policy has been suffused with a naïve liberal perspective that is all about getting the right formal institutions and not at all about informal power.

On occasion, this has contributed to the disastrous unravelling of a viable political settlement, as in the failure of the coalition powers to halt Iraq’s slide back into anarchy under the premiership of Nouri al-Maliki. In Kenya and Rwanda, the effects have not yet been of comparable severity. Nevertheless, Chapter 8 argues, naïve liberalism has worked by two routes to reduce the chances of Rwanda’s settlement evolving in a safe and satisfactory way. One route is through the unmitigated attention given to the regime’s shortcomings in terms of liberal-democratic norms in most academic writing and journalism. The other is the way a failing state-building project in the Democratic Republic of Congo has been bolstered by contested claims, and enduring myths, that shift the lion’s share of the blame onto Rwandan foreign policy, with significant effects on aid flows.

Kenya is a very different case: a country of much greater economic potential but signally lacking the settlement needed to realise this potential. What we say about this will seem no less controversial than our interpretation of the DRC/Rwanda episode. It needs to be stressed that the forces in play in Kenya are overwhelmingly domestic. All the same, the way international, especially US and British, influence was exercised around the 2013 elections and the International Criminal Court indictments of Uhuru Kenyatta and William Ruto seems consistent with our proposition about the harmful effects of a naïve liberalism backed by global power.

**“ *international constraints are most significant when they affect the enabling level of the political settlement.* ”**

## 1.8 Implications for policy engagement and future research

The DRA project arose, three years ago, from the need for a more rounded story, addressed to academics and especially policy-makers, about the potential for developmental regimes in Africa. The TD research had indicated clearly enough the need for a fresh approach to development challenges in Africa, including a new level of priority to agriculture and more concern for outreach, urgency and expediency in formulating and implementing policies. By looking closely at the historical record, APPP had shown that African politics was not as consistently anti-developmental as the conventional wisdom supposed. Developmental regimes in Africa are possible, so long as we do not expect them (against all historical evidence) to require prior achievement of open and transparent, democratically accountable and comprehensively capable governance. But this left several critical questions unanswered.

The research summarised in this report has sought to answer these questions and takes us closer to a complete account. One of the most challenging questions was how African countries might be expected to replicate what happened in Indonesia, Malaysia and Vietnam in earlier decades, given the radical differences in context. Elites of those countries are widely assumed to have been responding to existential threats from Cold-War era peasant mobilisation. Does this not reduce the relevance of that experience to Africa? The regimes in Ethiopia and Rwanda may be seen as responding in a broadly similar way to systemic vulnerabilities with their roots in the rural sector, but they are the exceptions. This is a good question to ask, but we have shown that the ‘threat’ thesis has been over-sold, even in the Asian context. The evidence suggests a lesser role for political interests and a greater role for ideas and ideologies in explaining differences across countries, in both Asia and Africa. This has the major policy implication that **those with influence in the matter must persist in advocating vigorously for fuller and more purposive implementation of commitments on agricultural priority such as those in the African Union’s Maputo Declaration.**

Close consideration of comparative experience also points to the importance of factors that provide a bridge between ideas-based and interest-based, or political economy, explanations. One such bridging variable is the willingness of policy-makers to search out solutions to national problems and discover by trial and error how best to make progress with the resources to hand. As argued in Chapter 7, **a problem-driven and learning-oriented policy-making style seems to be a common feature of otherwise varied development success stories.** This has led us to include policy approach, as well as pro-poor, pro-rural policy content, in our specification of what should count as a developmental regime. Another, universal or near-universal, feature of development processes producing impressive outcomes is that they have relied on islands of excellent economic governance, not on comprehensive reform. We have addressed the challenging question of what this means for agriculture in Africa by going back to basics. A close look at the crop and livestock sub-sectors that have done better than average over the last decade suggests that **the most relevant type of ‘island’ may be innovation clusters in which farmers, market agencies, credit agencies and knowledge centres collaborate, with the state playing a role but not necessarily a dominant one.**

Another big question at the outset of the DRA research was about how African regimes might be expected to maintain a developmental orientation for long enough, given the historical tendency for high-growth episodes in Africa not to be sustained, for reasons linked to leadership transitions. We have shown, on the best available evidence from both Southeast Asia and sub-Saharan Africa, that **leadership transitions that are sufficiently smooth to maintain economic growth are most likely to be assured under regimes with a well-institutionalised dominant political party.** Since the research was done, a leadership transition in Ethiopia has appeared to add credibility to this interpretation. The findings are highly pertinent to upcoming transitions in several other countries, including the intriguing pair of Uganda and Rwanda, although in elaborating a concept of developmental regime we have been led to emphasise factors that underlie and may help to explain the character of the dominant party, shaping the way it works in practice. These factors are what we are calling the political settlement.

The DRA research on leadership transitions joins a great deal of other recent evidence to confirm that theories about governance for development need to be focused on institutional variables other than those foregrounded in ‘good governance’ or ‘inclusive institutions’ rhetoric. Together with our findings about policy choice and policy-making styles, this points to a compelling message for international development practice. **We have been in thrall for far too long to concepts of governance for development that have a purely ideological, and indeed rather narrowly Anglo-American, origin.** It is high time for development professionals to speak truth to power in this respect, and to do so in greater unison. The politicians who, rightly or wrongly, steer the

diplomacy and development assistance efforts of rich countries need to be told, far more forcefully than has happened hitherto, that the way development happens and is best supported is too important to be settled without primary reference to evidence.

Further research must not be a reason for delaying this practical struggle. However, the DRA project's findings do suggest some priorities for researchers. Our proposal on the conceptualisation of developmental regimes, with its three interconnected layers – policy, policy approach and political settlement – needs further empirical validation. In particular, **for both theoretical and practical reasons, we need to know more than we do now about the range of types of political settlement represented in the recent history of the developing world.** For each type, we need to be able to say more about how the settlement affects the workings of the prevailing institutions and particularly the ability of policy-making groups to take a problem-driven, learning process approach with a suitable time horizon. This is a critical matter for domestic reformers, especially in aid-dependent countries where the incentive to use policies as signals for donors and voters, rather than to solve problems, is great. It should also be of concern to aid donors and the diplomatic missions of developed countries.

In recent years, development agencies have been quite strongly affected by the allure of randomised control trials (RCTs) and other statistically rigorous techniques of impact assessment. As numbers of such evaluations have been undertaken, it has become apparent that their limitations include a difficulty of generalising about development interventions that work across country and regional contexts (Rodrik, 2008; Woolcock, 2013). Consequently, there is a growing need for a systematic typology of relevant contextual factors that can guide a realistic form of aggregation of findings about impacts. If the arguments in this report are correct, this should take the form of a well-supported typology of political settlements.

Donors are also showing some openness to the proposal that they should be supporting PDIA-type working methods (Andrews, 2013), including supporting in-country initiatives that are 'politically smart and locally led' (Booth and Unsworth, 2014). A recent 'manifesto' on Doing Development Differently, capturing several of these ingredients, has been attracting large numbers of signatures from development professionals around the world (DDD, 2014). This movement is based on case-study evidence, personal experience and a large body of writing about fields of human endeavour other than development (e.g., Harford, 2011) suggesting that there are better forms of development practice than the current programming of the donors. However, the same difficulty arises. What works in one context may not work in another. **There is an urgent need to marry up the effort to document better ways of working for development with a more systematic approach to varieties of country context.** This should be a top research priority in the coming years.

“ *the politicians need to be told that the way development happens is too important to be settled without primary reference to evidence.* ”

# Policy for development in Africa

## Learning from Southeast Asia

David Henley<sup>1</sup> and Jan Kees van Donge<sup>2</sup>

**M**uch of the debate on how to reduce poverty in Africa centres on notions of what it was about Western countries that helped them become rich. This includes most of the thinking on the importance of ‘good governance’ and the rule of law.

There is less focus on the experience of rapidly developing countries in Asia, where ‘good governance’ prescriptions have been rare. The little attention that is given to Asian models of development often draws misleading conclusions. Sometimes the wrong models are chosen: Japan and Korea, for example, where institutional conditions were never really comparable with those in African countries.<sup>3</sup> Sometimes, the writers use more appropriate models, such as Malaysia and Indonesia, but focus on their recent industrial growth, overlooking the policy choices that first caused their fortunes to turn, at a time when their economies were still comparable to those of Africa.<sup>4</sup>

By studying the historical turning points in the development of Southeast Asian countries, we can better identify the real policy preconditions for development success.

### Lessons from Southeast Asia

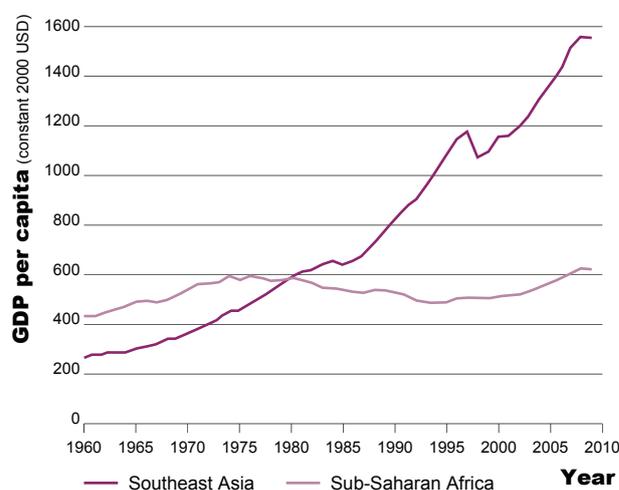
Southeast Asia is, consistently, the most successful region of the developing world in terms of economic growth and poverty reduction. In 1960 its inhabitants were on average much poorer than Africans; today they are two and a half times richer. In Southeast Asia this entire half century has been one of continuous growth, apart from a brief hiatus at the turn of the millennium caused by the Asian financial crisis. In Africa per capita income stagnated in the 1970s, declined in the 1980s, grew weakly in the 1990s, and today is still barely higher than in 1975 (Figure 1).



Local female farmer from Karurumo village, Kenya  
Photo: P. Casier (CGIAR)

Although aggregate growth in Africa was quite rapid from 2000 to 2008, like the previous period of African growth in the 1960s it does not seem to have translated into a commensurate poverty reduction.<sup>5</sup> In many Southeast Asian countries, by contrast, growth has been accompanied by spectacular reductions in poverty.

**Figure 1: Real GDP per capita compared**



Source: calculated from World Development Indicators online.

**Table 1: Timing of the preconditions for sustained growth in Southeast Asia and Sub-Saharan African**

Countries studied	1 Macroeconomic stability	2 Economic freedom	3 Pro-poor public spending	Transition to sustained growth enabled
Indonesia	1967	1967	1967	1967
Malaysia	never an issue	no history of over-regulation	1958	1958
Cambodia	1986	1989	1999? <sup>▲</sup>	1999?
Vietnam	1986	1989	1976	1989
Nigeria	1996	1986	-	-
Kenya	only occasionally an issue (1992)	1997 <sup>♣</sup>	- <sup>†</sup>	-
Uganda	1989	1989	-	-
Tanzania	1995	1985	1967-82 <sup>◇</sup>	-

**Notes:**

<sup>▲</sup> Since 1999, there has been a new emphasis on rural development, but opaque financing and the short time frame make this hard to assess.

<sup>♣</sup> No history of agricultural collectivization, but the rural economy was heavily regulated until recently. 1997 marks the start of the National Cereal and Produce Board Commercialization Project, a key moment in deregulating marketing.

<sup>†</sup> Budget allocations to agriculture were large in the 1960s but the focus was on an elite of 'progressive' large-scale farmers (Christopher Leo, *J. Modern African Studies* 16, 1978: 619-38).

<sup>◇</sup> The Nyerere period saw large transfers of surplus from peasants to the state (Frank Ellis, *J. Peasant Studies* 10, 1983: 214-42). However, here we refer to investment budget allocations.

In Indonesia, for example, 60% of the population lived below the national poverty line in 1970. By 1984, this had fallen to 22%.<sup>6</sup> Malaysia saw a fall from 49% to 18% in the same period.<sup>7</sup> Looking at different start/end dates, the percentage of people below the poverty line in Thailand fell from 57% to 24% between 1963 and 1981. More recently, Vietnam has seen a particularly dramatic fall in poverty rates between 1993 and 2008: a reduction of around three-quarters, from 58% to 14%.

Most of Southeast Asia shares with most of Africa a history of colonial rule during which its economies were based on subsistence agriculture and the export of primary products. The two regions also share a persistent postcolonial record of poor-quality governance. In the 1980s, for example, Indonesia was consistently rated as a more corrupt country than Nigeria in international surveys.<sup>8</sup> The fact that one major Southeast Asian country, Burma (Myanmar), continues to be excluded from the region's growth miracle adds weight to the hypothesis that the success of most countries is determined not by geography, history, or institutional legacy, but by policy choices.

## Policy choices at developmental turning points

Comparative historical study of four national development trajectories from Southeast Asia (Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia and Vietnam) and four from Africa (Kenya, Nigeria, Tanzania and Uganda) suggests three essential policy preconditions for sustained growth and poverty reduction.<sup>9</sup> Together, these appear to be sufficient as well as necessary conditions for developmental success. All three, however, must be present simultaneously before a developmental turning point is reached.

1. **Sound macroeconomic management.** Macroeconomic stability is essential, requiring policies that embody a strong commitment to combat inflation. Given such commitment, inflation may exceed 10% without jeopardizing sustained growth; but it must not exceed 20% for any length of time.
2. **Economic freedom for peasants and small entrepreneurs.** In most cases, there has been little or no growth in the countries with development strategies based on accumulation by the state or economies that are state-dominated. Smallholders need to be able to select their own crops and reap the profits.
3. **Pro-poor, pro-rural public spending.** Sustained growth and poverty alleviation depend on the adoption of pro-poor policies directed at agriculture and rural development, particularly to raise the productivity and profitability of smallholder food crop farming through public investment in irrigation,



*success is determined by policy choices.*

transport infrastructure, and state-subsidized technological improvement.<sup>10</sup> This involves allocating 20% or more of the development budget to the agricultural sector, and ensuring that most of this benefits peasants rather than large landowners.<sup>11</sup>

While conditions 1 and 2 are being met increasingly in Africa, condition 3 remains elusive. Most African countries have never seen heavy public investments designed to benefit poor farmers. In the few that have, such as Tanzania during the 1970s, those investments were not accompanied by economic freedom and were not, as a result, effective.

By the year 2000, most African countries, including the four in this study, had achieved macroeconomic stability and removed the most serious constraints on the economic freedom of farmers and entrepreneurs. Combined with increased international demand for African primary products, especially minerals, this has led to respectable levels of aggregate economic growth. However, in the continued absence of adequate public investment in rural development, there has been no breakthrough in the productivity of smallholder agriculture to compare with Southeast Asia (Table 1).

As a result, the impact of African economic growth on poverty remains weak, and its future uncertain, amid rising inequality, limited domestic market growth, and continued food insecurity. Nor is there any sign in Africa of the industrial transformation that followed on the heels of the agricultural revolution in Southeast Asia.

### **What was not included in the successful policies?**

Almost as important as positive lessons are negative ones on what was *not* included in the preconditions for sustained growth and poverty reduction in Southeast Asia. Authoritarian rule, for instance, was not essential (Malaysia was at least partly democratic throughout the period); nor were foreign aid (although this was put to good use in Indonesia), the eradication of corruption, liberalization of the financial system, privatization of public utilities, or the emergence of an indigenous bourgeoisie (the Southeast Asian business community was, and is, mostly of Chinese origin).

Industrial policy was not of central importance. While the most successful Southeast Asian countries are now heavily industrialized, there was no industrial growth on a large scale until mass rural poverty reduction was well advanced. As late as 1982, after 15 years of sustained growth



*most African countries have never seen heavy public investments designed to benefit small farmers.*

and poverty reduction, the manufacturing sector in Indonesia accounted for just 11% of GDP and 3% of exports.<sup>12</sup>

When manufacturing growth did happen, it was largely a private-sector response to macroeconomic stability, economic freedom, adequate infrastructure, and a healthy rural economy. These conditions ensured political stability; private saving and investment; enlarged domestic markets; and a cheap, reliable food supply for workers. Attempts by Southeast Asian governments to direct industrial development along Japanese or Korean lines – nurturing ‘infant industries’ to compete in export markets – have generally failed. The enterprises and institutions involved were captured by political interest groups too strong to accept the strict deadlines that must be met to ensure international competitiveness.<sup>13</sup>

### **What kinds of government succeeded?**

The governments that made the right policy choices believed in ‘shared growth’ and were based on ‘growth coalitions’ that included peasant farmers.<sup>14</sup> They prioritized the redistribution of income and assets to the poor and to rural areas.

Their motives varied, from ideology (social justice, nationalism) through political pragmatism (fear of radical or socialist opposition), to a correct interpretation of the historical relationship between agricultural and industrial development.<sup>15</sup>

The successful governments also understood that market forces are essential to successful development, and that market and state are complementary, not alternatives, in the development process. The types of market intervention they favoured involved investment, subsidy, and the supply of public goods (the redistribution of resources) rather than regulation (the use of coercive power beyond the power to tax). Agricultural subsidies and rural roads are of little use if farmers are not free to grow what they want and sell it to the highest bidder.

## **Policy implications**

The implications of these findings for African and international opinion-leaders are clear:

- Where possible, African policy-makers should be encouraged by all appropriate means to promote pro-poor agricultural development. Policy should reinforce the existing pledge by heads of state in the Maputo Declaration of 2003 to allocate at least 10% of national budgets to agriculture and rural development.
- Where political conditions for pro-poor rural development are lacking at national level, it may be possible for development cooperation to help create them at sub-national level. The Office du Niger (Mali), where sustained growth has been achieved on the basis of irrigated rice cultivation with the support of Dutch cooperation, offers a possible model.<sup>16</sup>
- African governments should not be encouraged to imitate the state-directed industrial strategies of Northeast Asia, or to adopt any policies that favour industrialization – even export-oriented industrialization – at the expense of the investment needed for agricultural development.

# Africa's economic transformation

## Policy and governance

David Booth<sup>1</sup>

Over the 50 years from 1960, a set of countries in Southeast Asia achieved economic growth and poverty reduction rates that far outstripped those achieved by similar countries in Africa. Why?

According to evidence from the Tracking Development (TD) project, the reasons lie in the timing and sequencing of the adoption of three policy features:

- macro-economic stability
- pro-poor, pro-rural public spending
- economic freedom for peasants and small entrepreneurs.

Coming from a multilateral, international research project on the comparative development trajectories of Southeast Asia and sub-Saharan Africa, this finding is important and timely for two reasons.

First, it adds force and some much-needed additional clarity to a growing but still fragile consensus about the limitations of Africa's accelerated economic growth performance over the past decade.

Second, it sharply contradicts the prevailing diagnosis of Africa's lagging development performance for the past 30 years – that the primary problem is institutional and its ultimate cause 'bad governance'.

This chapter elaborates these arguments and goes on to address the implications of TD's headline finding about the primacy of policy. It explains how this should be understood as a critique of an influential view of the relationship between economic development and governance reform. Far from closing debate on the governance factor in successful development, this critique requires the debate to become more sharply focused.



Boy herding cattle, Nigeria  
Photo: Curt Carnemark / World Bank

## Economic transformation

Since the late 1990s, the performance of an expanding group of sub-Saharan African economies has improved markedly, appearing to justify speculation that the Asian 'tiger' economies are about to be matched by African 'lions'.<sup>2</sup> Africa's higher rates of economic growth have been, for the most part, sustained and are not entirely dependent on high commodity prices. In some countries, this economic growth has been accompanied by reductions in aggregate poverty incidence.

However, an emerging consensus among economists within and outside the region cautions against interpreting the recent upturn in growth as a development breakthrough.<sup>3</sup> African growth is not yet accompanied by the structural changes, widespread improvements in productivity and growing technological capabilities that are the main ingredients of successful development. It does, however, provide a more favourable context in which to tackle the more fundamental challenge, that of economic *transformation*.

TD's conclusions contribute to this emerging consensus. Overwhelmingly, the most important weakness in the pattern of recent growth in sub-Saharan Africa is the neglect of productivity improvement in smallholder agriculture. The idea that agricultural transformation is the necessary foundation for wider structural change is hardly new, but it is endorsed in a particularly compelling way by TD's paired comparisons of Kenya and Malaysia, Nigeria and Indonesia, Tanzania and Vietnam, and Uganda and Cambodia.

TD's case studies also help to clarify the implications of 'transformation' for Africa. They provide a useful corrective to the tendency in some of the new-structuralist literature to focus prematurely (in the African context) on manufacturing growth and industrial upgrading.<sup>4</sup>

Similarly, the TD findings contribute some useful cautionary messages about the extent to which a transformative policy approach implies a more activist role for the state. The favoured forms of market intervention by Southeast Asian states which achieved development successes 'involved investment, subsidy, and the supply of public goods (the redistribution of resources) rather than regulation (the use of coercive power beyond the power to tax)'.<sup>5</sup>

This contrasts with the pattern associated with state-led development in Northeast Asia (Japan, S. Korea, Taiwan). But – it is argued – Southeast Asia is a more relevant model for sub-Saharan Africa.

## **Policies and governance I**

The headline findings from TD emphasise the continued failure of African leaders to adopt the 'three-legged' policy approach that was critical to success in Southeast Asia. This implies that governance matters less, and the content of policy more, than has usually been supposed. However, taking policy choice more seriously in the genesis of comparative development performances does not reduce the relevance of research on governance. It rather requires it to be focused more sharply.

**“ lack of a perspective on politics has been the Achilles' heel of heterodox economic approaches.**

A key implication of the TD headline is that the reasons for divergent outcomes between Africa and Southeast Asia are not fundamentally about differences in geographical, historical, cultural or institutional points of departure. Crucially, they are not rooted in any historically inherited divergences in governance structures. Southeast Asian countries were no less 'neo-patrimonial' during their growth acceleration than their African counterparts. In several cases, corruption indicators were higher in Asia. So, Africa does not need to achieve 'good governance' before, and as a precondition for, development success.

TD's findings coincide with those of other current research programmes on comparative development, including Africa Power and Politics (APPP) and the Danish-led Elites, Production and Poverty (EPP) project. These initiatives share with TD the presumption that the good governance agenda is misleading on the prerequisites for economic transformation in Africa. Similarly, concepts like neo-patrimonialism have been used for too long as blanket explanations for Africa's development difficulties.

From this common starting point, APPP and EPP provide insights that help to answer the more refined questions about governance that are prompted by the TD findings. Together, the three programmes fill a gap in the emerging consensus on Africa's need for economic transformation, not just growth.

The recent literature on transformation is strong on the economics but neglects the question of governance beyond the affirmation that more 'developmental' states are required. The only answers provided rely on the threadbare claim that 1980s 'structural adjustment' measures and the hegemony of neoliberal economic prescriptions are entirely responsible for the failure of African states to assume a developmental character.<sup>6</sup> This is serious, as lack of a realistic perspective on the politics of developmental governance in Africa has been the Achilles' heel of heterodox economic approaches since the 1980s.

## **Policies and governance II**

The more refined questions about governance that TD, EPP and APPP have been addressing may be linked to the second-level implications of the TD findings. These are concerned with the following question: To the extent that pro-peasant policies and investments are demonstrably needed, what specific conditions are necessary and sufficient to have them adopted and effectively implemented?

TD's outputs, published and unpublished, contain rich discussions of the antecedents of the rural-based development visions adopted by political leaderships in Southeast Asia. The factors discussed include the threat or reality of mass rural insurgency under communist

leadership, but also elite mind-set variables that shaped the way leaders responded to threats and crises.

With reference to Africa, it is argued that the failure of countries like Nigeria to adopt sustainable development strategies grounded in rural transformation owes a good deal to ‘flawed vision’ arising from the background and experience of senior officials.<sup>7</sup> However, this cannot be the end of the story.

The ideas in the heads of top civil servants do matter and may be shaped as much by their professional backgrounds and the dominant intellectual currents of the day as by political logics. Nonetheless, politicians select the kinds of officials whose ideas are consistent with their particular legitimisation strategies and exigencies of survival. The influence may be mutual, but there is – at the very least – an elective affinity between the bureaucratic mind-sets that come to the fore at different moments in particular countries and the political rationales of the people at the top.

Lewis provides a convincing account of politician-bureaucrat interaction in the Nigerian case. Killick tells a similar story about Ghana.<sup>8</sup> Where political elites are divided and factionalised, regimes are preoccupied with short-term survival and seldom provide political cover to ambitious technocrats. Economic ideas about the requirements of an industrial ‘big push’ are influential under political leaders that associate national grandeur with manufacturing. And so on.

With respect to effective implementation, TD research has shown that rural development programmes in successful Southeast Asian economies were characterised by a particular combination of ‘outreach, urgency and expediency’. As Henley summarises:

1. ‘The primary criterion by which policies and interventions are selected is the *number of people* to whom they provide direct material benefit ...
2. At least at the beginning ... development strategies do not involve meticulous long-term planning [but] establishing clear priorities ... and acting on those priorities using the resources immediately to hand.
3. In successful developmental states, legal principles, administrative procedures, political rights, and ideological precepts all take second place to the goal of improving the material living conditions of as many people as possible, as quickly as possible. Achieving that goal may involve tolerating corruption, bending rules, and infringing rights’.<sup>9</sup>

There is a need to explain how these principles were put into effect and then sustained. One immediate explanation is provided by TD accounts of the role played by specialised technocratic organisations that enjoyed a kind of political protection denied to the public service at large.



*politicians select technocrats whose ideas are consistent with their legitimisation strategies.*

However, the first-level explanation poses, again, the second-level question. What were the political conditions that allowed such protection to be extended in the first place and then to be sustained in the face of challenges?

### **Distinguishing developmental regimes**

APPP’s response to these questions relates to the strategies adopted by politicians under different sub-types of neo-patrimonial regime.

As a rule, political leaders have short time-horizons and limited ability to restrict socially harmful rent-seeking by other members of the political class. Large, complex investments, including those required to support small-scale rural enterprise, are correspondingly difficult.

However, in Africa, as in Asia, some regimes have succeeded in establishing ways to manage economic resources and rents with a view to long-term interests.<sup>10</sup> Without ceasing to display clientelist features, such regimes have been more likely to choose policies (and technocrats) and design implementation mechanisms that meet the needs of economic transformation. Historical examples include Côte d’Ivoire, 1960-75, and Malawi, 1964-79.

There are three further observations:

- Historically, this has happened under dominant leaders and/or dominant political parties emerging from independence movements or internal wars. It has rarely, if ever, been the outcome of multi-party electoral competition.
- Such successes usually incorporate some mechanism to ensure that politically salient ethnic communities share in the benefits; but they are not sustained in the absence of institutionalised arrangements to manage leadership successions.
- The adopted strategies for agricultural transformation have rarely been centred on smallholder agriculture, which has weakened their sustainability.

Of course, this 'developmental neo-patrimonialism' is not in favour in official policy thinking about Africa. It tends to conflict with the 'good governance' principle of maintaining an arm's length, non-interventionist, relationship between politics and business. It also troubles the many who associate progress unreservedly with multi-party electoral competition.

It is, however, supported strongly not just by comparative African experience, but by that of Southeast Asia. Neo-patrimonial yet developmental governance prevailed throughout the early high-growth periods of the most 'African-like' Southeast Asian countries (in terms of history and social makeup): Indonesia and Malaysia.

## **Developmental regimes in Africa**

Despite reaching highly complementary conclusions, TD and APPP do not have all the answers. This is why the Developmental Regimes in Africa (DRA) project has been launched with two objectives: to engage with the policy community around the implications of the TD and APPP findings; and to address research

questions about the prospects for developmental regimes in Africa that cannot be answered on the basis of current evidence.

These questions are concerned with:

1. The likely origins of developmental regimes that support transformative policies under current African conditions
2. Ways to manage leadership successions to achieve sustainability
3. The different roles that may be played by politically protected technocracies
4. Ways in which international conditions can become more supportive.

As these issues are explored, African and international thought-leaders should remain focused on how to meet just two urgent needs:

- Policies that are effective in supporting productivity growth in smallholder agriculture
- Governance structures that permit politicians to look beyond the very short term and direct sufficient resources to processes of transformation.

## Sources of developmental ambition in Southeast Asia and sub-Saharan Africa

David Henley<sup>1</sup> and Ahmad Helmy Fuady<sup>2</sup>

Over the last half century, Southeast Asia has been the most consistently successful region of the developing world. In 1960 its people were, on average, much poorer than Africans; today they are two and a half times richer. As their economies took off, some Southeast Asian countries recorded rates of poverty reduction that were unprecedented in human history. In Africa, poverty has been much more intractable, even in the face of strong aggregate growth.

According to Chapter 2, Southeast Asian countries could reduce poverty fast because their governments prioritised pro-poor agricultural and rural development in both political and budgetary terms, as well as providing sound macroeconomic management and conditions of economic freedom (especially for peasant farmers). Public investments – in irrigation, research, input subsidies, agricultural extension, price stabilisation, and rural infrastructure, education and health care – raised the productivity and profitability of smallholder farms. This brought about the kind of development the World Bank calls shared growth. In Africa, by contrast, few countries have ever combined economic freedom and sound macroeconomic management with pro-poor, pro-rural public spending.

This chapter aims to explain these different policy orientations, looking at eight countries: Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, Vietnam, Nigeria, Kenya, Tanzania and Rwanda.<sup>3</sup>

### Systemic threat versus learned assumptions

According to one influential interpretation, success in Southeast Asia has been spurred by its systemic vulnerability to impending peasant revolution and/or foreign invasion – an intriguing and partly convincing argument.<sup>4</sup> But the impact of such threats on the political interests of decision-making elites does not fully explain the differences in policy stance between



Indonesia's Suharto and Nigeria's Obasanjo viewed rural life very differently. Photos: Government of Republic of Indonesia (l), Public domain (r)

and among African and Southeast Asian countries. Differences in assumptions about the nature of the development process are just as important.

This has major policy implications. It means priority should be given to changing the mindsets of African leaders by stressing that successful development elsewhere in the world has been achieved with strategies that are inclusive, pro-poor and pro-rural.

### Systemic threat?

According to the first argument, systemic threat had two salutary effects on political elites:

- It forced fractious elements of the political establishment to unite behind an (often military-led) regime that could protect their common interests.
- It forced them to consider the interests of the non-elite masses and therefore to adopt pro-poor policies.

In their origins, the most successful developmental regimes of Southeast Asia were either counter-revolutionary states that had faced a serious

communist threat (Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand), or post-revolutionary states needing to appease their mass support base (Vietnam).

In **Indonesia**, Suharto's New Order emerged from the violent destruction of the Indonesian Communist Party in 1965, and its pro-rural, pro-poor development strategy aimed to prevent a resurgence of agrarian radicalism.<sup>5</sup> In **Malaysia**, the fight against rural poverty was seen by national leaders as a direct continuation of the anti-communist struggle known as the Malayan Emergency (1948-1960). In 1959 the government vowed, in its pursuit of poverty reduction, 'to marshal all available resources, and to deploy them with such determination and energy as were used to free the country from the menace of Communist terrorism'.<sup>6</sup> In **Thailand**, the communist challenge was part of the rationale for rural development efforts in the 1960s. As one deputy prime minister stated in 1966: 'If stomachs are full people do not turn to communism'.<sup>7</sup> In **Vietnam**, communist governments have felt obliged to deliver some of the benefits they had promised the poor, even if this meant abandoning much of their original anti-capitalist ideology.<sup>8</sup>

## Looking closer

These factors provide a useful first take on the issue, given that rural threats to incumbent elites were not a major factor in the political histories of **Kenya, Nigeria** or **Tanzania**, with **Rwanda** a possible exception.<sup>9</sup> However, elite political interests dictated by forces of revolution and counter-revolution cannot have been the only drivers of the pro-poor intent of Southeast Asian developmental regimes:

- In **Indonesia**, by the time the New Order adopted its pro-poor policies in the late 1960s, the Indonesian Communist Party had already been destroyed. The technocrats of the time deny that they were motivated by anti-communism, insisting that their choices were dictated by economic logic and common sense.<sup>10</sup>
- In **Malaysia**, communism was concentrated almost entirely within the ethnic Chinese minority. Yet the beneficiaries of the rural development effort of the 1960s were ethnic Malays, who showed little enthusiasm for communism.<sup>11</sup>
- In **Thailand** the communist insurgency did not become a serious threat until the mid-1960s, and

peaked in the 1970s. Yet most pro-poor public investments (particularly in irrigation) had been initiated in the 1950s, when the Thai communist party was minuscule, and the country was peaceful and orderly.<sup>12</sup>

- In the case of **Vietnam** we must ask whether, given the almost total absence of organised political opposition, self-preservation is the communist party's sole incentive to deliver inclusive development – or whether its leaders are holding *themselves* to account for their performance.

If the interpretation in terms of self-accountability is even partly correct, we must look beyond political incentives to understand the Asia-Africa development divergence.

## Learned assumptions about development

The second explanation for greater pro-poor developmental ambition in Southeast Asia is that it results from learned assumptions about the nature of the development process. A starting point here is the observation that regardless of political interests and calculations, even African leaders of rural origin tend to see rural life and rural people less positively than their Southeast Asian counterparts.

- In **Indonesia**, Suharto (president 1967-1998) recalled fondly how a boyhood spent 'playing in the fields among the farmers' had aroused in him 'a distinct feeling of sympathy for them'. From his uncle, an agricultural extension officer, he had learned 'not only about the theory of agriculture but also about the practical aspects of farming'.<sup>13</sup> Like his chief technocrat, Widjojo Nitisastro, he had 'great faith' in the wisdom of farmers and in their receptivity to new ideas.<sup>14</sup>
- Olusegun Obasanjo, twice president of **Nigeria** (1976-1979 and 1999-2007), is also the son of a farmer. But in his biography, Obasanjo shows little nostalgia for his rural roots and describes how his father encouraged him above all 'to escape the drudgery that was peasant farming in Africa'.<sup>15</sup>
- Tun Abdul Razak, the driving force behind **Malaysia's** rural development efforts in the 1960s and 1970s, was raised by farming grandparents. His biography records happy memories of village life, and links his concern for rural welfare to the fact that 'his early years had been spent working with the ordinary village people in the rice fields'.<sup>16</sup>
- As a boy, **Kenya's** first president Jomo Kenyatta 'had no intention of taking up farming life'. Having 'left home to escape all that', he spent almost 15 years studying in Europe. His anthropological treatise on his own (Kikuyu) people was criticised by one of his teachers for showing 'perhaps a little too much in some passages of European bias'.<sup>17</sup>



*systemic threats  
do not fully explain  
policy differences.*

- Although Marxism did not encourage the leaders of independent **Vietnam** to idealise all things rural, most were also influenced by Confucianism, in which farmers were second only to scholars in status. Political leaders saw peasants as embodying national virtues. Rural-born soldier-intellectual and deputy prime minister (1955-1976) Vo Nguyen Giap reminded ‘satiated and snobbish’ city people that it was the ‘peasant spirit’ that had enabled Vietnam to resist foreign aggression.<sup>18</sup>
- Julius Nyerere of **Tanzania** had a rural and traditional African upbringing, but was converted to Christianity by European missionaries after being ‘convinced by their arguments’.<sup>19</sup> As president (1962-1985) he believed strongly in rural development, but doubted the ability of the peasantry to recognise and exploit development opportunities without intensive education and supervision by the state.<sup>20</sup>
- In **Thailand**, the success of the rice harvest is believed to depend on royal blessing. King Bhumibol Adulyadej, crowned in 1946, has styled himself as a champion of the small farmer in the face of change and urbanisation, touring the countryside to promote village development projects. In 1984 the country’s National Identity Office dubbed him the ‘Farmer King’.<sup>21</sup>
- Current leader of **Rwanda** Paul Kagame is the son of an aristocrat driven into exile in Uganda, where he relied on education to avoid descent into landless poverty.<sup>22</sup> As president he would search for a ‘short cut’ to development, based on information technology, bypassing agriculture entirely.<sup>23</sup>

On their own, each of these individual cameos might not mean much. Taken together, however, they suggest a rather consistent difference between Africa and Asia in terms of culturally or educationally implanted ideas about the rural world and its relation to modernity. In Southeast Asia the attitudes of urban elites to farming and farmers, although condescending, are coloured by nostalgia and some admiration. In Africa the divide between town and country appears wider, with a lesser tendency to admire rural life.

These different attitudes have historical roots, the contrast between city and countryside having been sharper in Africa than in Asia. In Southeast Asia there is a long tradition of indigenous urbanism. In Africa, many of today’s cities are colonial in origin, and were seen as alien European enclaves for generations. An African who moved from the countryside to the city in the early twentieth century was crossing a cultural divide.

African attitudes to development have been shaped by experiences in which the encounter with the advanced economies of Europe was linked to a dramatic and comprehensive *transformation*. All areas of life were affected: society and communication, knowledge and



## give priority to changing the mindsets of African elites.

belief, material culture and even eating habits, as urban elites switched from indigenous African food crops and maize to imported wheat and rice. One legacy of this transformation has been a collective assumption of developmental *dualism*: a conviction that progress can only be achieved by a quantum leap from (rural) backwardness to (urban) modernity. In Southeast Asia the colonial experience involved less of a rupture with the past.

Unlike their Southeast Asian counterparts, African elites were impatient for a structural economic transformation in which peasant farming would make way for modern life. Their development models focused on the technological and cultural modernity found in already rich countries. These models led them to elitist policies based on education, industry and urbanisation, rather than on raising the productivity and profitability of smallholders. Table 1 summarises these divergent visions.

**Table 1: Differences in elite visions of development**

Southeast Asia	Sub-Saharan Africa
incremental (but potentially rapid)	transformative
poor people become richer	poor countries acquire the things rich countries have (technologies, industries, goods, rights, institutions)
growth	modernisation
productivity	knowledge
inclusive	elitist
oriented to the undesired starting point of development: mass poverty	oriented to the desired end point of development: industrial or post-industrial modernity
concerned with establishing immediate priorities	concerned with making comprehensive plans

## Policy implications

Today, as in the past, even African leaders of rural origin shy away from strategies to improve rural life *in situ*, and favour accelerating a transition to urban modernity that reflects their own personal journey. How can they be encouraged to prioritise agricultural and rural development, in accordance with Declaration

7 of the 2003 Maputo assembly of the African Union, and ensure that those who benefit are poor peasant farmers rather than large landowners? We see six elements to be considered.

1. Clearly, international actors cannot create the kind of revolutionary threat that helped to inspire such policies in Asia.
2. There is little evidence that electoral democracy can generate the same salutary political pressure on African (or indeed Asian) governments.<sup>24</sup>
3. Nor is it possible to alter colonial history or the cultural factors that have shaped the attitudes of Africa's leaders and intellectuals towards rural and agricultural development.
4. However, persuading people to change learned attitudes is still easier than trying to reconfigure the national political forces that constrain their actions.
5. Given the common perception among African leaders that policy guidance by international actors has neocolonial overtones, such guidance must be sensitive and support national policy ownership.

6. Nevertheless the success of international actors in promoting market reforms and better macroeconomic policy in Africa suggests that such actors can achieve something similar on pro-poor, pro-rural public spending.

The most promising approach, therefore, is to help change the mindsets of African elites by drawing their attention to the fact that successful development elsewhere in the world has been achieved largely through inclusive, pro-poor, pro-rural strategies. This should take precedence over historically less well founded finger-wagging on the importance of good governance, democracy or even free trade.

A crucial lesson is that pro-poor development not only relieves poverty, but also initiates processes that can bring prosperity to whole countries, putting them on course for the kind of industrial and urban modernity long admired by African elites.

## The succession trap

### High growth Africa and the pitfalls of leadership change

Tim Kelsall<sup>1</sup>

Sub-Saharan Africa is now the world's fastest growing region, with predictions that in the next decade seven out of 10 of the world's most expansionary economies will be African. This is not the first time, however, that African economies have proved dynamic. They grew respectably between 1960 and 1974, and a handful posted extremely rapid growth rates. This growth was not sustained, however; a result, in part, of problems related to leadership succession.<sup>2</sup>

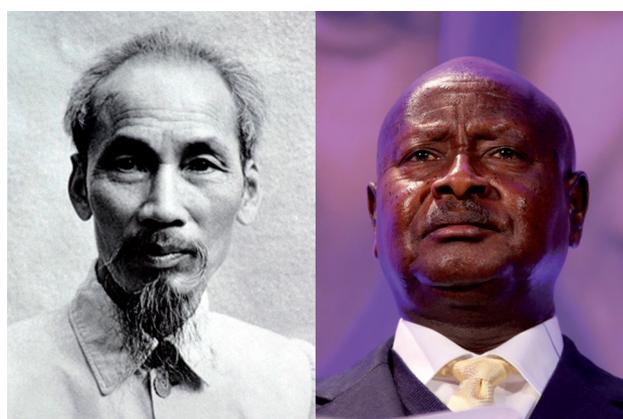
Since the succession issue is raising its head in several of today's 'lion' economies, including Angola, Ethiopia, Rwanda and Uganda, this chapter examines comparative evidence from two regions, sub-Saharan Africa and Southeast Asia, to answer the question: 'Under what conditions does high economic growth survive leadership succession?'<sup>3</sup>

We find that countries that succeed in combining high growth with succession have one of two distinct characteristics:

- a dominant political party with a consensual decision-making tradition, or
- an organic bureaucracy insulated from the political process.

### Why does succession affect growth?

Economic growth requires political leaders to make credible commitments that establish *de facto* property rights – only then will investors be confident that their assets will not be expropriated or undermined. In the early stages of economic growth, a precedent of 'responsible behaviour' on the part of the leadership may generate such confidence. But what happens when the political leadership changes? Obviously, confidence can



*Vietnam's Ho Chi Minh built a strong consensual party with a succession tradition; Uganda's Museveni hasn't. Photos: Public domain (l), Russell Watkins/DFID (r)*

drop, amid uncertainty over whether the new leadership will honour old commitments.

In 17<sup>th</sup> century England, such uncertainty was reduced when leaders accepted formal checks on power that limited their ability to renege on old commitments.<sup>4</sup> That experience has inspired much current advice on strengthening legislatures and legal systems in the developing world, not to mention currently fashionable ideas about 'inclusive institutions' or a 'golden thread linking the rule of law, the absence of conflict and corruption, and the presence of property rights and strong institutions'.<sup>5</sup>

However, our own research shows that in Asia and Africa today, credible commitments are more likely to be provided by strong political parties or, more rarely, insulated bureaucracies.

### Our method

Our study identified medium or large countries in sub-Saharan Africa and Southeast Asia that had experienced high growth for a decade or more since 1960.<sup>6</sup> We then focused on those that had also

**Table 1: Growth with succession: crucial and non-crucial conditions**

Country growth phase/variable	Growth with succession	'Golden thread'	Ethnic homogeneity	Economy growing?	Favourable external environment	Leader under 75	Pro-market mixed economy	Intermediate systemic vulnerability	Strong consensual party	Organic insulated bureaucracy
Malaysia 1966-84	●	○	○	●	●	●	●	●	●	○
Vietnam 1988-2010	●	○	●	●	●	○	●	●	●	○
Laos 1999-2010	●	○	○	●	●	○	●	●	●	○
Mozambique 1997-2010	●	○	○	●	○	●	●	●	●	○
Thailand 1961-98	●	○	●	●	●	●	●	●	○	●
Indonesia 1968-97	○	○	○	○	○	○	●	●	○	○
Côte d'Ivoire 1961-81	○	○	○	○	○	○	●	○	○	○
Malawi 1965-74	○	○	○	○	○	○	●	○	○	○
Kenya 1963-80	○	○	○	●	○	○	●	●	○	○

**Key:**  
 ● Condition present      ○ Condition absent  
 ● Non-crucial condition      ○ Condition significant only by its absence      ● Crucial condition

**Note:** As a 'false positive', Cameroon has been omitted from this table.

experienced a leadership succession before, during or after this period, namely Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Indonesia, Kenya, Laos, Malaysia, Malawi, Mozambique, Thailand, and Vietnam. Informed by current theories of economic growth, as well as the literature on political succession, we then combined historical analysis with systematic comparison to tease out the factors uniting those countries that combined high growth with leadership succession, and distinguishing those where succession, or concerns about succession, was associated with economic decline.

The results provide pointers for policy-makers into the probable future trajectories of today's fast-growing states, as well as insight into where they might leverage change.

### What were the crucial conditions?

First, let us talk about conditions that were not significant: 'inclusive institutions' or a 'golden thread'. Although institutions in the successful countries were strong, they were not inclusive or free from corruption. Three out of five of the sustainable growth regimes were either military

regimes or one-party states for most of their high-growth periods. Only Malaysia and Mozambique have been multi-party democracies for most of their growth phase, and even these have been characterized by dominant ruling parties and uneven political playing fields. Regardless of regime type, the rule of law has been weak in most countries, property rights have been enforceable through the courts to varying degrees, and levels of cronyism and corruption have been high.

Next, we can identify conditions that mattered in some cases but not all. Growth was more likely to be sustained through succession if leaders handed over power before the age of 75, if the country had a fairly homogenous ethnic structure, if the state had its roots in an identifiable pre-colonial political formation, and if the external economic environment was favourable. However, there were exceptions across the board, which means they are contributing, not crucial, conditions, as shown in Table 1.

Finally, we can identify a combination of three conditions that were present across all the regimes that combined succession with growth. First, leaders were motivated to search for high growth to stave off perceived threats to their survival from external aggression, popular mobilization, and/or resource scarcity.<sup>7</sup> Second, all had a broadly pro-market and pro-foreign investment policy package, although all retained substantial state involvement in the economy. Third, as indicated above, all the successful regimes embedded policy-making in strong institutions of one or other of two specific types:

“ *neither 'inclusive institutions' nor a 'golden thread' was significant.* ”

- a strong party with a tradition of consensual decision-making and leadership succession, or
- a strong, organic bureaucracy, effectively insulated from changes in political leadership.<sup>8</sup>

## Examples

Malaysia provides a good example of the first type. Between 1966 and 1984, annual growth averaged 7.17%. Motivated by the threat of communism and domination by ethnic Chinese, in 1947 the Malay political leadership united under Dato Onn, known as the ‘Gandhi of Johore’ in the United Malays National Organisation (UMNO).<sup>9</sup>

A tradition of orderly leadership succession was established as early as 1951 when Onn resigned from the party, having alienated colleagues over the issue of multi-racialism. That he was not ousted owed much to a Malay tradition of subservience to authority, adopted as political ideology by the party elite. Equally, when Onn’s successor Abdul Rahman lost colleagues’ support following anti-Chinese riots in 1969, he too stepped down with dignity, transferring power to his deputy, Tun Abdul Razak. When Abdul Razak died in 1976, he was succeeded without incident by *his* deputy, Hussein Onn.

The embedding of Malay leaders in a robust party with established succession traditions reassured investors that, whatever the changes at the top, a broad commitment to private enterprise and sound economic management would be sustained.

Mozambique is another example. The country experienced growth of 7.83% between 1997 and 2010, despite a change of leadership in the ruling Liberation Front of Mozambique (FRELIMO). The party was formed in opposition to Portuguese rule in 1962 by an elite group of assimilated Africans. A tradition of orderly succession was established in 1969, when Eduardo Mondlane, FRELIMO’s founding president, was killed by a parcel bomb. Although party vice-president Uria T. Simango was appointed successor at a meeting of the Executive Committee, this decision was overturned by FRELIMO’s more powerful Central Committee, with Samora Machel becoming President. When Machel died in a plane crash in 1986, the Central Committee nominated Joaquim Chissano as President. In 2002, Chissano announced that he would not contest the next Presidential election, and the party congress nominated Armando Guebuza to succeed him.

Like all political parties, FRELIMO has its tensions, but these are muted by an ‘enduring sense of mutual loyalty [...] and internal cohesion’.<sup>10</sup> Forged during the liberation war, unity has been maintained



***sustainable growth regimes had strong ruling parties with consensual traditions.***

even though FRELIMO has abandoned its historic commitment to socialism and taken measures to encourage private enterprise. A stream of investments has followed.

Malaysia and Mozambique, together with Laos and Vietnam, contrast with countries such as Côte d’Ivoire, Indonesia, Kenya, and Malawi, which have not sustained strong growth.

Take Indonesia. Under General Suharto’s Golkar party, its economy grew at 7.2% a year between 1972 and 1997. But Golkar was not a robust party with a tradition of consensual decision-making: it was a front for Suharto’s personal power with no consensus over a fitting successor. Suharto’s technocrats were mostly co-opted from external institutions, not rooted organically in a strong civil service that could withstand a leadership change. When the East Asian crisis of 1997 exposed Indonesia’s economic weaknesses, Suharto’s allies deserted him – leaving no credible alternative to his rule. Although he resigned in 1998, it was years before political and economic stability returned.

Kenya is a comparable African case. The economy grew at more than 7% annually between 1963 and 1978 under Jomo Kenyatta’s Kenya African National Union (KANU) party. As an institution, however, KANU was moribund, with Kenyatta ruling through personal networks and the administration. When Kenyatta’s health began to fail in 1977, the Attorney General proclaimed that discussion of the succession was treason, and Vice-President Daniel arap Moi acceded to power as per the constitution the following year. However, he lacked a political base, and tried to undermine Kenyatta’s old allies in the party and administration, transforming KANU into his own instrument of personal rule. The effect was to destabilize the economy, and after two years the growth rate fell, averaging less than half that achieved by the previous regime.

A similar pattern can be seen in Cameroon – ostensibly a success story but actually another unsustainable case. Here Ahmadou Ahidjo ran the country as his personal fiefdom from Independence to 1982. Growth took off in 1974, but his successor

Paul Biya soon undermined Ahidjo's power base in a way that damaged the economy. Although oil prices kept growth high until 1987, overall growth under Biya (1982-2010) was a disappointing 2.3%.

Our only country without a robust ruling party that managed to sustain growth across leadership successions is Thailand. Between 1961 and 1998 growth averaged more than 7%, notwithstanding more than 15 leadership changes, as power oscillated between military factions and weak civilian parties. Predictability amid instability was provided by a bureaucracy with roots in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, which was strengthened further in the 1950s. Continuity in the mission and personnel of these institutions gave domestic and international investors confidence, despite a bewildering number of political successions.<sup>11</sup>

## **Growth and succession in contemporary Africa**

Of the four fast-growing African 'lions' mentioned earlier – Angola, Ethiopia, Rwanda and Uganda – all are ruled by dominant 'liberation struggle' parties. As in Mozambique, such parties are more likely to enjoy the kinds of decision-making that facilitate orderly transition. Indeed, Ethiopia has recently undergone a smooth succession, and the prospects for Rwanda also appear good, although more research is needed on both. In

Angola and Uganda, however, leaders are older, external threats are less severe, and despite their post-liberation history, power is more personalised. It is conceivable that Eduardo dos Santos and Yoweri Museveni will voluntarily take steps to strengthen their parties and ensure a legitimate succession, or else strengthen and insulate their technocracies from succession-related fallout – but history provides no precedents.

## **Policy implications**

In high-growth neo-patrimonial states like Angola and Uganda, there may be a role for development partners in encouraging political and economic actors to consider what institutions could supply credible commitments for investors in a context of transition. But as the preceding analysis has shown, these institutions need not take an Anglo-American form. Where ruling parties are very strong, albeit personalized, the emphasis might be on making them more collegial and consensual. Where political parties are actually rather weak, an alternative option would be to strengthen and insulate the bureaucracy. By contrast, in countries that already have strong political parties with consensual traditions and conventions governing political succession, policy-makers with growth at the top of their agenda would be well advised not to upset their hegemony.

# Agricultural ‘pockets of effectiveness’

## Kenya, Nigeria, Tanzania and Uganda since 2000

Ton Dietz and André Leliveld<sup>1</sup>

Previous chapters have analysed the large differences in long-term development performance between African and comparable Southeast Asian countries.<sup>2</sup> Drawing on research by Tracking Development,<sup>3</sup> they have argued that most of these differences depend on whether or not political leaders implement pro-poor and pro-rural public investment policies. Negative attitudes among African policy-makers about peasants and the prospects for improving small-farm productivity have been singled out as a major problem.

We need, however, to nuance this argument, focusing on recent agricultural performance in Africa. How much progress is occurring in particular sub-sectors of crop and livestock production because of or despite prevailing policy attitudes? This question is addressed in a new stream of research by DRA and the Agro-Food Clusters in Africa (AFCA) Collaborative Research Group of the African Studies Centre, Leiden.

Four recent DRA-AFCA research reports<sup>4</sup> on the four African countries studied by Tracking Development – Kenya, Nigeria, Tanzania and Uganda<sup>5</sup> – suggest that ‘pockets of agricultural effectiveness’ are emerging. First, they show that Africa’s agricultural performance was not entirely gloomy between 1960 and 2000. Second, they show rising agricultural production, improved food security and higher yields for many agricultural products since 2000. The four countries studied seem to be experiencing an ‘agricultural revolution’, albeit rather more muted than Southeast Asia’s ‘Green Revolution’.

These ‘pockets of effectiveness’ suggest the need to look beyond policy, to include urban-rural dynamics and agro-food cluster institutions as drivers of agricultural change. Policy-makers dealing with food security and agricultural development in Africa should pinpoint the most successful agricultural products over the past decade and determine the reasons for their good



*A farmer in Tanzania inspects the maize harvest*  
Photo: Gates Foundation

performance. Engaging with the main stakeholders in ‘innovation clusters’ around successful agricultural value chains can generate insights about the perceived strengths and weaknesses of these clusters, including government policies and practices at various scales. The performance of local governments in and around major cities also matters, particularly their (encouraging or frustrating) connections to various private and public sector parties in and around agricultural value chains.

### Method

The research considered five major datasets:

- data from the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO) on (staple) food production between 1961 and 2011
- data linking food production and food consumption in the same period based on so-called ‘food balance sheets’
- data on breakthrough crops and livestock products between 2000 and 2010
- data on child undernutrition
- geographic maps of many of these variables.

This chapter focuses on changes from 2000 to 2010. One caveat concerns the reliability of the FAO data, with doubts expressed about some figures relating to (for example) maize in Uganda and potatoes in Kenya. FAO data are used because there are no other sources in this field with the same scope.

## Findings by country<sup>6</sup>

### Kenya

Major progress can be seen when comparing Kenya's crop production for 2000 and 2010. Here, 'successful' crops are defined as those where production growth out-paced the 30% growth in population over the decade and yield increased by 20% or more. The most successful crops for Kenya were (in order): beans, wheat, potatoes, sweet potatoes, bananas and mangoes, which together covered around 23% of Kenya's total harvested area in 2010. As for livestock and livestock products, the most promising are cattle, sheep, chicken, milk and eggs.

### Nigeria

The 'most successful crops' in Nigeria were defined as those with: (i) an area of more than 150,000 hectares in 2010; (ii) a growth in production between 2000 (average 1999-2001) and 2010 (average 2009-2011) that exceeded the 28% population growth for the same period; and (iii) a yield increase of 20% or more over the decade. 'Successful livestock' were those whose numbers grew faster than the population. For Nigeria, the most successful crops were maize, cassava, rice, melon seed, potatoes and pineapples. Nigeria did, however, see some crops, namely millet, oil palm, cocoyam and karité nuts, decrease in absolute terms in both yield and production.

Maize is a key example of a successful crop that is now a staple food. From stagnation in the 1960s, through a rollercoaster performance over the next three decades, maize has been a very successful crop since 2000. Cropping areas have kept pace with population growth and steady increases in yields have meant far greater maize availability per capita. Poultry was the most successful agricultural product in the livestock sector, alongside the related production of chicken meat and eggs, and pigs, sheep and goats also proved successful. Milk production and fish more than kept pace with population growth.



*pockets of effectiveness suggest the need to look beyond policy.*

### Tanzania

For Tanzania, crops were regarded as successful if production out-paced the country's 32% population growth for the decade *and* yields increased by at least 20%. Seven crops, in particular, saw substantial production increases between 2000 and 2010: sweet potatoes, groundnuts, bananas, coconut, cowpeas, pigeon peas and sesame. Sunflower seed, 'other pulses' and tobacco have also seen increases in yields, but these have been lower than population growth. No livestock species experienced a growth in numbers higher than population growth.

### Uganda

Uganda made major progress in crop production between 2000 and 2010, with the 'most successful crops' defined here as those where production out-paced the country's 38% population growth over the decade and yields increased by more than 20%. Together, the 'most successful crops' represented 21% of Uganda's harvested crop area in 2010, with maize accounting for about 63% of this. However, these successful crops – cotton, rice, maize,<sup>7</sup> cowpeas and oilseed – are not 'miracle' crops. They tend to be cultivated and/or to be dominant in northern Uganda. They experienced a peace dividend after the 2006 ceasefire, when internally displaced people returned to their land, pushing up national production figures. This also applies to goats, the most affordable form of livestock (and a kind of savings account) in comparison with more expensive cattle.

Some other livestock species show remarkable growth figures over the last decade: sheep and particularly pigs together accounted for 16% of the total tropical livestock units in Uganda in 2010. Cattle production is growing, as cattle are increasingly kept for their milk, and freshwater fish production has more than doubled in the past decade. Uganda's 'problem crops' are bananas and coffee, with negative production and yield between 2000 and 2010. They accounted for only 2% of the area under harvest in 2010. There were, however, no 'problem livestock species'.

## How do the countries compare?

For an effective comparison, we need to look at population dynamics across the four countries. Uganda has seen explosive population growth (38%) over the past decade, and while the other three countries grew less, their growth was still high: Tanzania 32%, Kenya 30% and Nigeria 28%.

Each country's relative potential food security is also important. Our assessment assumes that staple foods provide (on average) 65% of all food requirements and average daily food requirements are 2,200 kilocalories per capita, per day. In

estimating ‘potential’ food sufficiency, we consider only national production figures, and do not count the use of food harvests for seed and feed, food exports, imports, waste or stock movements.

The differences between areas and between wealth and other categories within the four countries are considerable and can explain the hunger and under-five undernutrition in some countries, even during periods when the total figures suggest there has been food sufficiency.

As shown in Table 1, Nigeria, Uganda and Tanzania achieved potential food sufficiency based on national food production in both 2000 and 2010. Kenya’s figures show a more problematic situation, although improvements may be noted between 2000 and 2010.

**Table 1: Potential food security in Nigeria, Uganda, Tanzania and Kenya, 2000 and 2010 (ordered from most to least progress)**

	Food coverage in kcal per capita per day		Potential food sufficiency (%)	
	Year 2000	Year 2010	Year 2000	Year 2010
Nigeria	2846	2720	199	190
Uganda	2782	2328	195	163
Tanzania	1580	2251	110	157
Kenya	974	1255	68	88

Source: Authors’ calculations based on FAO data.

### Most successful cereal crops and pulses

Maize has become the most important food crop in each of the four countries studied. In Nigeria and to a lesser degree in Uganda, yield increases have been high over the past decade and are now highest in these two countries, but they have dropped alarmingly in Tanzania from a relatively high level, and have not increased much in Kenya. With world averages much higher than the highest recorded yield figures in any of the four countries (close to 2,500 kilograms per hectare in Tanzania in 2000 and currently at this level in Uganda), further improvements seem possible.

Nigeria and Uganda have seen the greatest yield increases for rice, but Kenya still leads on average yield levels, despite a decline. Most of Kenya’s rice comes from well-supervised irrigation schemes that may explain its relatively high levels, but the recent performance of these irrigation schemes should be studied to determine why yield levels have been deteriorating.

The very diverse performance of wheat is interesting: only Kenya seems to do well, and yield levels in the other countries have declined.

## “ public agencies can learn from bottom-up cluster performance assessments.

Among the pulses, one crop that merits further study is cowpeas, as yield levels have improved everywhere, particularly in Uganda and Tanzania. For pigeon peas, dry beans and other pulses, the situation is more diverse and generally less encouraging.

### Most successful root crops and tubers

Potatoes may be a particularly interesting crop for further study. Although experts question current FAO figures, potato yield levels are reported as good in Kenya and in Nigeria (although levels are much lower in the latter), but are declining in Uganda and Tanzania. Cassava did well in Nigeria, where it is a very important crop both as a staple food and as animal feed. Sweet potatoes did well in Tanzania and Kenya, where relatively high yield levels were recorded, but did less well in Nigeria.

### Most successful other crops

Mangoes, oil-palm seeds and sunflower seeds have shown steady increases in yield in all four countries and merit further comparative study. Bananas are displaying another trend, with ever-higher yields in Tanzania and especially in Kenya, but declining (and low) yields in Uganda. Yields of pineapples, which are mostly a plantation crop, are increasing in Nigeria but are faltering elsewhere.

## Recommendations for future policy-oriented research

Future research could investigate the factors behind the relatively successful agricultural production rates in these four countries over the last decade. Was this because of market expansion, institutional arrangements, such as value-chain and agro-support institutions including business development, and/or state support? It would be useful to compare the circumstances surrounding agricultural production, as it is clear that successful agricultural products are very country-specific. Only a few can be regarded as an overall success story in all four countries at the same time.

Market growth has involved expansion of the internal markets in the four countries. According to FAO data, very little food is exported, although there is a regular and often unrecorded trade in food (crops

and livestock) across borders. Countries like Kenya have achieved successful horticultural exports, although these account for a small percentage of the country's total food production.

As everywhere in Africa, urban populations in all four countries are increasing rapidly, even though current levels of urbanisation are still relatively low. The past decade has seen considerable economic growth all four countries, particularly their urban economies, despite some ups and downs, such as Kenya's economic problems between 2007 and 2009 following post-election violence. Urban consumers are demanding more from their hinterlands and cities are becoming markets that require greater agricultural production and innovation.<sup>8</sup> Food insufficiency in nearby countries, like South Sudan and Somalia for Kenya and Uganda, and Rwanda and Burundi for Tanzania, could well increase demand for agricultural produce from the four countries studied here.

A study is also needed of relevant institutional arrangements for agriculture in general, from input support to training, marketing and logistics, and for the most successful agricultural products in particular. Government-based institutions still matter in all four countries, but the private sector, which tends to be locally owned but with some foreign influence, has also become important.

Four sets of questions could guide systematic follow-up research.

- What does the value chain for a successful agricultural product look like? Which are the main production and consumption areas and how are they linked into the chain? And who are the major stakeholders in the chain itself?
- Which are the main supporting agencies and institutions (government, business and/or others) and how do they assess the performance of successful agricultural products?

- What are the local, national and international elements in the chain of innovation and how are they related?
- What have been the major incentives and disincentives in recent production and yield increases according to farmers and stakeholders in the production-consumption chains?

An understanding of the link between potential food sufficiency, average food security and the nutritional impact of food expansion could be gained by investigating access to these 'most successful commodities' by the poorest quintile of food consumers. Future research might include an analysis of explicit government poverty-alleviation policies and other relevant policy agencies in the four countries in general terms, zooming in on the most successful commodities.

It is important to see how and to where agricultural products produced in these four countries are being exported. Is Africa's food industry part of a new scramble for the continent's resources? And what is the recent history of food imports? Where do they come from and what role do policy and policy formulation and implementation play in imports, exports and investment incentives?

In terms of policy priorities for national and local governments, and for international agencies supporting agricultural innovations, our research suggests the importance of support for innovation clusters that stimulate productive liaisons between farmers, market agencies, credit agencies and national and international knowledge centres. Improvements in food security require prioritising those agricultural products that are important foods for the poorest 40% of people, with a focus on the poorest people in major urban centres and in areas with the highest levels of child undernutrition. Here, public agencies can learn from bottom-up cluster performance assessments for the most successful and most important agricultural products.

# Towards a relevant concept of developmental regime

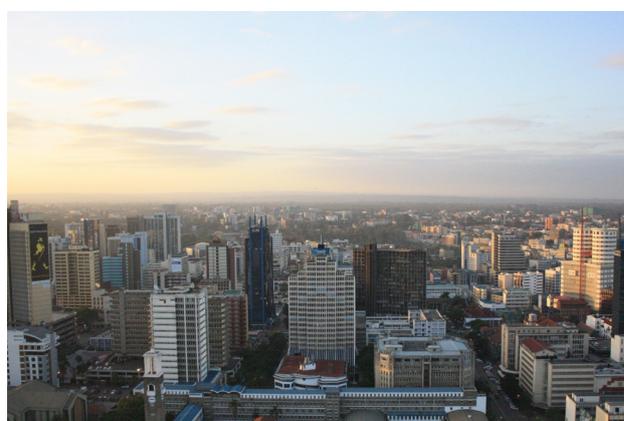
David Booth<sup>1</sup>

The economic agenda in Africa is changing. African countries are now routinely experiencing high per capita rates of economic growth. Most of this growth, however, is occurring within an untransformed economic structure, reproducing in many respects the pattern countries inherited at independence. Improvements in smallholder agricultural productivity remain patchy and modest, a critical weakness in countries where the most people continue to seek their livelihood in rural areas. Mining, construction and the service sectors are booming in response to international, especially Chinese, demand and the needs of new middle classes. But the acquisition of technological capabilities and economic power by expanding firms in manufacturing or agro-processing is not a major feature of the growth pattern. Consistent state policies in support of either agricultural transformation or technology-based industries are notable by their absence.

A growing literature is devoted to economic aspects of this challenge and the major policy implications. However, the political challenges implied by new economic policy agendas have received comparatively little attention. This gap in thinking is of major concern for two reasons.

First, the economic analysis is quite clear in suggesting that development policy for late-starters requires substantial state action to correct market failures. Yet a 30-year conventional wisdom about 'governance' in sub-Saharan Africa has ruled out state-led development, regarding it as a recipe for returning to the inefficiencies and imbalances that halted growth in the past. Simplifying only a little, the standard advice has been: first get good governance and then think about allowing states to resume intervening in markets.

Second, over ten years at least this advice has been thoroughly critiqued as both inconsistent with



*Nairobi cityscape.  
Photo: Flickr / Clara Sanchiz*

any historical experience and liable to be counter-productive in practice.<sup>2</sup> But this critical literature is much stronger on why the conventional recipe is wrong than on what should be put in its place. We need, and do not yet have, a good answer to the question: What should count as a developmental political regime in the context of contemporary Africa?

## Developmental states and regimes

The older literature on developmental successes in Asia does not help as much as might be expected in addressing this question. Extant concepts of developmental statism bear the marks of their origins in a very specific set of debates about newly industrialising countries (NICs) in East Asia. Features include a preoccupation with the merits of an activist industrial policy,<sup>3</sup> and an association of developmentalism with particularities of the Park regime in South Korea, including its authoritarianism and the quality of its bureaucracy.<sup>4</sup> While later literature problematized the connection between dictatorship and development orientation and broadened the discussion away from the first NICs,<sup>5</sup> developmental state concepts have continued to be reproached for their limited 'portability'.<sup>6</sup>

This is unsatisfactory in the 21<sup>st</sup> century and for Africanists. It is now possible to draw on a much wider set of Asian experiences of structural economic change leading to massive poverty reduction, in Southeast Asia as well as China. There is a new comparative politics literature largely focused on developmental divergences within Southeast Asia,<sup>7</sup> as well as Tracking Development's analysis of Southeast Asian and African experiences. Within the African context, too, it has been argued by APPP that the range of country experience now available provides some basis for systematic reflection on the politics of what works and what doesn't. As Routley<sup>8</sup> concludes from a comprehensive recent survey, it is time to stop blunting our analysis by focusing narrowly on the presence or absence of features that came to the fore in connection with first-round or even second-round developmental states in Asia.

This chapter builds on the ample foundations of this growing literature as well as on the theoretical contributions of Khan, North, Andrews and their co-authors.<sup>9</sup> It makes a fresh attempt to tackle the question of what should count as a developmental political regime in the context of contemporary Africa.<sup>10</sup> The central proposition is that the concept needs to include something about economic policy *content*, a view on policy-making *approaches* and something about *political settlements*. All three criteria are relevant and the last should be regarded as especially important.

## Policy content

Our opening observations about the new economic agenda in Africa provide one possible starting point. As a minimum, surely, a regime should qualify as developmental on the basis of its economic and social policies. A developmental regime must be actively promoting and supporting a productivity revolution in agriculture and/or pursuing a deliberate 'industrial policy' with a view to building capabilities and acquiring new comparative advantages for exploitation within regional or global markets.

There is much to be said for approaching the definitional question in this way, through policy content pure and simple. Tracking Development research has shown that policy differences by

themselves explain most of the post-independence divergence in economic performance between Africa and Southeast Asia.<sup>11</sup> The case, originally set out by Johnston and Mellor,<sup>12</sup> for ensuring that economic growth in low-income countries is agriculture-led has been regularly reinforced by research at IFPRI and elsewhere and remains relevant to much of Africa.<sup>13</sup>

The literature on industrial policy sometimes presents itself as an alternative to agricultural transformation, but it is more compelling as a complement. Chang, Reinert and others have made the argument that throughout history states have become economically successful by promoting activities in which the acquisition of technological capabilities generates 'increasing returns'.<sup>14</sup> Justin Lin's 'new structuralism' marries this with international trade theory by pointing out that success comes from emulating countries that are only slightly ahead in the race for development, so that the capabilities acquired are not too far out of line with the country's comparative advantages, given its endowments of land, labour and capital.<sup>15</sup> The potential for labour-intensive manufacturing to migrate to Africa as Asian wages rise is one such opportunity.<sup>16</sup> This links back to agricultural policy because the fact that food is inefficiently produced and remains expensive in Africa helps to make African wage levels unattractive to footloose Asian investors.

To the extent that we pursue a policy-based approach to the definition of developmental regimes, therefore, there are reasons to pay attention to both agriculture and industrial catch-up. But this is still insufficient. We must also consider how policy *approaches* differ between countries that do and countries that do not find their way to policies that suit their circumstances.

## Policy process

The Africa/Southeast Asia research by Tracking Development did not just endorse the importance of rural development. It found Southeast Asian policy priorities to be underlain by a set of more fundamental principles. Leaders and the technocrats they empowered were interested in improving the economic and social lot of the mass of the population as quickly and effectively as possible, and they were very pragmatic about how they did this. They were guided by principles of urgency, outreach and expediency that are not widely observed in the governance of low-income countries.<sup>17</sup> As Routley emphasises, the only generally shared feature of Asian models of development success to date, including China, is the absence of a model, a focus on urgent action to address problems and a willingness to employ trial and error in the search for applicable solutions.<sup>18</sup>

“ *developmental state concepts have been reproached for their limited 'portability'.* ”

This conclusion is interestingly convergent with the findings of recent surveys of public policy making in developing countries. These emphasise problem-solving and iterative learning processes as the keys to sound policy choice and institutional design.<sup>19</sup> Arguably, states in history up to the present have arrived at the kind of policies recommended by economists not by pure intellectual conversion but as an outcome of processes of searching for solutions to perceived problems. Relevant experience has been picked up from other countries, but not followed slavishly. Some of Fuady's and Henley's informants from the team that supervised Indonesia's agricultural breakthrough certainly presented things this way.<sup>20</sup>

This suggests a supplementary approach to the question 'what is a developmental regime?' A developmental regime must be, among other things, one that practices problem-driven iterative adaptation ('PDIA' for short) in its approach to choosing and implementing policies.

Our argument is that an approach that incorporates the quality of policy processes makes better sense than one that focuses on policy content alone. But it too has limitations. It invites the question 'why?' In their elaboration of the concept of iterative adaptation, Andrews and his colleagues provide only a partial explanation for why PDIA is relatively rare quality in developing country policy-making. They make a convincing case that the availability of aid induces a strong tendency towards the adoption of institutional forms that are considered best-practice internationally. This serves to signal good intentions to donors. The signalling function of policy choice reinforces the 'isomorphic mimicry' that is a generally observed tendency in organisational development.<sup>21</sup> But the aid effect is surely not the only factor at work. Policy-making styles seem to differ among aid-dependent countries. And these differences appear to have something to do with the way domestic politics works. Specifically, policy processes seem to be shaped by the nature of the prevailing 'political settlement'.

## Political settlements

The concept of political settlement rests on two claims: a) that institutions matter, and b) that the way institutions work is shaped by non-institutional factors, especially the power distribution among major elements of a national elite, including its military, civil, economic and political wings.<sup>22</sup> As Parks and Cole explain:<sup>23</sup>

“ **the key thing allowing PDIA to become a significant mode of policy-making is a certain kind of political settlement.** ”

*'The fundamental insight of the political settlements framework is that governance, stability, and the quality and pace of development are viewed as the outcome of struggles and ensuing arrangements among powerful elites. These struggles largely involve informal processes of conflict, negotiation, and compromise. As elite factions seek to secure access and control over sources of wealth and power, or advance a particular ideology or national vision, they will often come into conflict with each other. "Political settlement" is a descriptive term that characterizes the nature of the arrangements among these elites to manage this conflict.'*

Khan defines a political settlement similarly as 'a consistent combination of institutions and a distribution of power such that the two are compatible and mutually supportive'.<sup>24</sup>

A fundamental element in these and other definitions of political settlement is the idea of a tacit agreement among the most powerful members of a society about the conditions under which they are prepared to engage in some form of peaceful political competition, rather than resort to violence.<sup>25</sup> The concept has common ground with the thesis of North and his co-authors, as well as with the use of the concept of 'elite bargain' or elite coalition in some conflict studies.<sup>26</sup> The common ground has two elements. First, the central issue in understanding varieties of historic social order is the different ways rents are used to control violence. Second, the way this is done has major implications for the pace and form of social and economic progress.

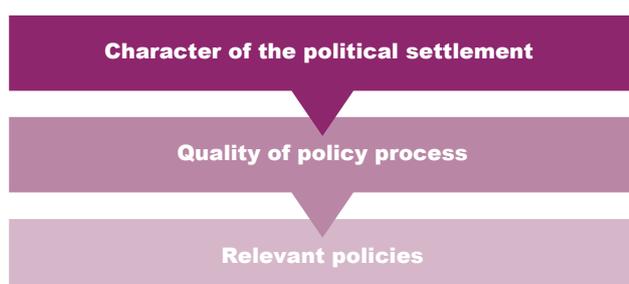
The political settlement or elite bargain approach rejects the proposition that progress is a matter of adopting the 'right' formal institutions or of complying with generally accepted liberal-democratic norms and practices. It is the nature of the political settlement that shapes a country's possibilities, not the formal structures as such. And this applies to both the maintenance of peace and the quality of the feasible policy-making for development.

## The linkages

Khan's typology of political settlements is a promising starting-point for thinking about developmental and other regime types.<sup>27</sup> In Khan's analysis, the more 'developmental' types of political settlement relieve the elites in power of pressure to govern only with a view to the short term. All settlements in developing countries are clientelistic in one way or another because the funding of politics on the basis of tax revenues from the formal economy is not yet possible. However, the degree to which policy is *driven* by the need to use rents in a discretionary way to buy the loyalty of elite factions and pay off political debts varies considerably among the types. This affects the state's ability to provide the public goods that are the key to sustained growth and economic transformation.

To this basic proposition, our concept adds the suggestion that freeing policy-making from short-term clientelistic imperatives is also the key to the problem driven policy-making discussed in the last section. The hypothesis is that the key thing allowing PDIA to become a significant mode of policy-making is a certain kind of political settlement. This in turn implies that the defining qualities of a developmental regime should include three layers, with the third, the nature of the political settlement, as the most fundamental from a causal point of view. Graphically, the hypothesis is that developmental regimes are constituted as shown in Figure 1.

**Figure 1: A concept of developmental regime**



## Implications

If our argument here is correct, there are important implications for both future analytical work and international policy. The proposed concept of developmental regime shifts attention away from the specific policy content and institutional features that were the focus of early theories about developmental states. By paying closer attention first to the policy approaches that have been associated with wise policy choices, and then to the enabling conditions provided by the political settlement, the concept becomes more broadly relevant and useful for analysing development trajectories in 21<sup>st</sup> century Africa. An important topic arising for future research is how exactly the more enabling type of political settlement can arise and be sustained under current African conditions.

Our layered approach also generates a differentiated set of questions about the ways international actors can help or hinder the emergence and consolidation of developmental regimes in Africa today. As argued in Chapter 8 below, it is possible that too much emphasis has been placed on the way the international system constrains countries' 'policy space', and too little on how it affects their political settlements.

## The role of the international system

David Booth<sup>1</sup> and Frederick Golooba-Mutebi<sup>2</sup>

There are good reasons for investigating ways the global system helps to shape political and economic incentives in developing countries. Northern governments have power to change aspects of the international context, whereas they have little real ability to influence the domestic politics of development. A number of recent studies have drawn attention to the many incentives arising in the international system that encourage elite behaviours harmful to national development.<sup>3</sup>

The emphasis of this work has been on regimes that are failing, where international factors amplify incentives to govern badly. Relatively little has been written about how they affect the incentives of regimes that are struggling to sustain processes of national development.

This chapter addresses that gap, distinguishing two categories of country: those such as Ethiopia and Rwanda where developmental regimes seem to be emerging and those such as Ghana and Kenya whose regimes show potential but seem regularly to fall at the last hurdle. Here we focus on Rwanda and Kenya.<sup>4</sup>

### What is a developmental regime?

An obvious preliminary issue is what should count as a developmental regime. This question has received little attention since the 1990s debate about 'developmental states' focused on newly industrialising countries in East Asia. We consider definitions in terms of economic policy *content*, policy-making *approach* and the nature of the *political settlement*.

As a minimum, a developmental regime should be one that is actively promoting a productivity revolution in agriculture and/or pursuing a deliberate



President Kenyatta of Kenya, elected despite warnings to voters.  
Photo: World Economic Forum / Benedikt von Loebell

'industrial policy' with a view to building capabilities for trade in regional or global markets. However, in history, states have arrived at policies for economic transformation not so much by pure intellectual conversion as through searching for solutions to perceived problems.<sup>5</sup> In the successful Southeast Asian countries studied by the Tracking Development research project, leaders were interested in improving the economic and social lot of the mass of the population as quickly and effectively as possible. They were extremely pragmatic in deciding how to do this.<sup>6</sup> Finally, we would argue, the feasibility of different policy approaches is determined by a country's 'political settlement'.

The concept of political settlement used here rests on two claims: a) that institutions matter, and b) that the way institutions work is shaped by non-institutional factors, especially the power distribution among major elements of the national elite.<sup>7</sup> This approach rejects the view that progress is a matter of adopting the 'right' formal institutions. The way institutions and power are combined shapes a country's possibilities, and this applies to both the maintenance of peace and the quality of feasible policy-making for development.

## How do the countries shape up?

Is the government in Kigali led by the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) a developmental regime in these terms? Regarding policy, agriculture is now being supported in the ways suggested by the most relevant Asian experience.<sup>8</sup> On industrial policy, the Rwandan approach has several of the right features, but it is not yet backed by the necessary capacity for steering and regulation. On the policy criterion, therefore, Rwanda qualifies as an incipiently developmental regime. Its policy processes also display a distinct problem-solving orientation. Finally, the country has arrived at a political settlement that is conducive to development. As we have argued elsewhere,<sup>9</sup> the political settlement in Rwanda has three elements which allow policy to be made as it should be, in a long-term strategic perspective and in an iterative, adaptive, problem-solving way. One of the elements is a remarkable level of power-sharing among legally recognised parties.

Kenya is obviously a different case. After independence, the country could have been both an agricultural and an industrial success story, but policies faltered in the 1970s and turned strongly negative in the 1980s.<sup>10</sup> Under President Moi, policy-making was increasingly driven by patronage, not developmental problem-solving. This cannot be explained just in terms of poor leadership and the inadequacy of the steps taken to institutionalise liberal-democratic good governance. Crucially important is the enduring dominance of ethno-regional blocs in the decisions of Kenya's voters and politicians. This is about the credibility of different sorts of politics.<sup>11</sup> Realistic solutions call for radical institutional innovation – the building of programmatic political parties and/or some previously untried form of power-sharing – to increase the credibility of politicians' commitments to the nation as a whole. The most remarkable feature of the current situation in Kenya is how little attention is given to *this* constitutional issue, as opposed to conventional devolution and separation of powers.

## Which constraints matter most ... in Rwanda?

To the extent developmental regimes are distinguished by the policies they pursue, there are obvious channels by which the international system

can be a hindrance. It is argued with some reason that developing countries face narrowing 'policy space' as a result of international trade agreements and the conditionalities of the big concessional lenders.<sup>12</sup> But the policy-space approach is unsatisfactory on its own for several reasons, especially when applied to low-income countries like Rwanda. The international dominance of neoliberal ideas about trade and markets is not absent as an influence on policy choice in Rwanda. However, it is not a decisive constraint, and on agriculture, international agencies have been strongly supportive of Rwanda's recent policies.

As argued by Pritchett et al., donor money influences the style of policy-making in many countries. It encourages tokenistic replication of policies and institutional arrangements that are held to be international best practices. It discourages stepwise learning from relevant experience.<sup>13</sup> However, the Rwandan case suggests this is not an automatic effect, even in a very aid-dependent country. Problem-solving and willingness to draw lessons from experience have been distinguishing features of the policy process, notably in agriculture and health. Based on the Rwanda case, our suggestion is that international constraints on the consolidation of developmental regimes are most significant when they interfere with the consolidation of a developmental political settlement.

The most likely reason for a developmental settlement to be threatened, we argue, is the global dominance of what we have referred to elsewhere as *naïve liberalism*. This expression refers to the view that, independent of context, progress is a matter of adopting the 'right' formal institutions or of complying with generally accepted liberal-democratic norms. Rwanda's political settlement is affected by naïve liberalism by two equally important routes: via pressure on Rwanda to change its domestic institutions to comply with liberal expectations; and via the policies of the international powers in DR Congo.

Naïve liberalism infuses both the academic literature and the global journalistic discourse about Rwanda. Its dominance creates a receptive ideological climate for disingenuous claims about 'lack of political space' in Rwanda, with the effect that these claims are widely disseminated and rarely challenged.<sup>14</sup> It makes it less easy for those who wish to engage constructively with the policies and institutions actually in place. It increases the government's 'bunker mentality', its sense that it is under constant attack and needs to defend itself proactively. This has been bad for Rwanda's relationship with its development donors, and makes it harder that it should be to work with them as partners in a problem-solving way.

“

*institutions and power together shape country possibilities.*

There are also indirect effects. Since the end of the Congo wars, the approach of the big powers and the United Nations has been to rebuild the state in DRC from the top down under the aegis of a tenuously elected national leadership. The genuineness of the political drive behind these reforms is doubted by almost all DRC experts. Even though everyone is aware of them, the actual complexities and challenges involved are given the 'blind eye' treatment. Maintaining the fiction of top-down state-building overrides any concern to address the specific conflicts and grievances that persist in many provinces, notably North and South Kivu.<sup>15</sup>

Rwanda is not alone among the regional powers in doubting the realism of a peace based on the imposition of the will of Kinshasa in the east of DRC. However, its refusal to take an active part in implementing the project is seen as especially irksome and threatening. This makes Rwanda liable to be singled out as the fall guy when things go wrong.

This is one of the things that happened in 2012, when the government of Rwanda was charged by the UN with providing political encouragement and military assistance to the M23 rebellion. Several of Rwanda's development donors found this claim sufficiently convincing – or disturbing to opinion back home – to suspend aid to the government. This left a large hole in the national budget, but other effects may be more enduring. Scapegoating Rwanda for events in DRC has made it more difficult for Rwanda to maintain its domestic political settlement, further enhancing its bunker mentality and weakening constructive cooperation.

### **... and Kenya?**

Does the experience of Kenya support our argument for placing the accent on political settlement effects? We believe so. In view of the sequence of events in the 1970s and 1980s, Kenya's agricultural and industrial disappointments cannot be laid at the door of limited policy space. Patronage-based policy-making was also clearly shaped by domestic exigencies.

At first sight, the blame for the current impasse on ethno-regional politics and the political settlement lies squarely with the country's political class. However, the poverty of international thinking on issues of this type has done Kenya no favours. The global influence of naïve liberalism creates an ideological climate in which non-standard approaches to constitution-making are seldom countenanced. Occasionally, moreover, actors in

“ *the most significant constraints hinder developmental political settlements.* ”

the global system get involved in a more palpable way in setting parameters for public debate in the country. Examples include the big-power diplomacy around the International Criminal Court indictments of the two men who were elected president and vice-president of Kenya in 2013.

The conventional way of seeing the ICC indictments is as a rare weapon against high-level impunity. This was no doubt the view of US Assistant Secretary of State Johnny Carson, who warned Kenyan voters in February 2013 that 'choices have consequences'. There is, however another view, supported by some of East Africa's leading intellectuals:<sup>16</sup> that pursuing judicial remedies in situations of political conflict bordering on civil war can be harmful to the maintenance of peace, as well as to the quality of policy generally. When a judicial process criminalises one side, threatening to disenfranchise it politically, this backs it into a corner. It can have unanticipated consequences, in this instance that of helping the accused to rally their supporters. Thus, while the international ideological context is of little help in addressing the fundamental problems of Kenya's political economy, direct interventions by the big powers can make matters worse.

In summary, the constraints highlighted in the policy space literature do not appear to have been limiting in practice for Kenya. As in Rwanda, the conditions for wise policy-making in the national interest are fundamentally about the underlying political settlement. The lack of any robust and influential alternative to naïve liberal concepts of governance for development is what emerges as the principal international constraint.

### **Policy implications**

It follows from this analysis that that concern about international constraints on the emergence of developmental regimes in Africa should not be focused on limited 'policy space'. Closer attention should be given first to policy *processes* and then to political *settlements*. The consolidation of a developmental political settlement is the process most likely to be hindered, given the global dominance of naïve liberalism.

Nothing in this chapter challenges the view that domestic politics is the primary determinant of the destiny of developing countries. However, those who have some influence on the international factors that help to shape the incentives of national elites have a particular duty to exercise that influence with care. Doing so may be a more valuable contribution than any amount of direct development assistance.

In that context, we make a particular plea for development agencies to counteract NGO advocacy and big-power diplomacy promoting naïve liberal remedies without due regard to context. Protecting the political settlements of emerging developmental regimes should be a prime focus for all those committed to 'doing no harm' in poor countries.<sup>17</sup>

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4. For example, Collier (2007).
5. AfDB et al. (2011: 12, 62-65) and ECA and AU (2011: 3).
6. BPS-Statistics Indonesia et al. (2004: 13).
7. Crouch (1996: 189).
8. International Center for Corruption Research, University of Passau ([www.icgg.org](http://www.icgg.org)).
9. Van Donge and Henley (2012).
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12. World Development Indicators Online.
13. Roemer (1994: 251).
14. Campos and Root (1996).
15. On the relationship between agriculture and industrialization, see Lipton (1977) and Mellor (1995).
16. Bais (2008: Summary, 55).

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2. McKinsey Global Institute (2010) and Radelet (2010).
3. Amoako (2011) and ECA and AU (2011).
4. Lin (2011).
5. Chapter 2 above.
6. ECA and AU (2011: Ch 5).
7. Henley et al. (2012).
8. Lewis (2007) and Killick (2010).
9. Henley (2010).
10. Kelsall (2011).

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1. Professor of Contemporary Indonesian Studies, University of Leiden, Netherlands.
2. Indonesian Institute of Sciences (LIPI), Jakarta.
3. Further details are given in Henley (2013) and Fuady (2013).
4. Campos and Root (1996), Doner et al. (2005) and Slater (2010).
5. Henley et al. (2012: 59).
6. Razak (1975: 6).
7. Dixon (1999: 85).
8. Hayton (2010: 3).
9. The reasons for the Rwandan exception are consistent with the argument of this chapter, but require fuller discussion, as provided in Henley (2013).
10. Henley et al. (2012: s60).
11. Ness (1967: 89) and Ricklefs et al. (2010: 330).
12. Ingram (1971: 275-279) and Wyatt (2003: 257, 267, 280).
13. Soeharto (1991: 4, 10).
14. Falcon (2007: 27).
15. Ojo (1997: 35).
16. Shaw (1976: 73).
17. Murray-Brown (1972: 79) and Malinowski (1938: 9).
18. Chinh and Giap (1974: 7-8).
19. Hatch (1976: 8).
20. Nyerere (1979: 54).
21. Baker and Phongpaichit (2009: 238).
22. Waugh (2004: 7-12).
23. van Luyten (2009: 6).
24. Poulton (2014).

## CHAPTER 5

1. Associate of the DRA Project.
2. For more details, see Kelsall (2013b).
3. For full details of the research, see Kelsall (2013a).
4. North and Weingast (1989).
5. See Acemoglu and Robinson (2012) and Cameron (2012).
6. We excluded countries with a population of under five million (e.g. Botswana) and countries where a portion of the growth phase could be accounted for by a peace dividend (e.g. Ethiopia, Myanmar). We defined high growth as growth of at least 7% per annum.
7. Doner et al. (2005).
8. Cameroon is an exception to this pattern.
9. Singh (1998).
10. Sumich and Honwana (2007).
11. Our analysis owes much to Raquiza (2012).

## CHAPTER 6

1. Director and Researcher at the African Studies Centre, Leiden ([www.ascleiden.nl](http://www.ascleiden.nl)) assisted by members of the African Studies Centre's AFCA Research Group: Akinyinka Akinyoade, Dick Foeken, Blandina Kilama, Wijnand Klaver, Heleen Smits, Sebastiaan Soeters and Merel van 't Wout.
2. E.g., Chapter 2 above.
3. Vlasblom (2013).
4. <http://www.ascleiden.nl/?q=publications/agricultural-dynamics-and-food-security-trends-nigeria;-uganda;-tanzania-and-kenya>; and also [http://www.institutions-africa.org/publications/pub\\_type/research-reports](http://www.institutions-africa.org/publications/pub_type/research-reports).
5. Dietz (2013).
6. Agricultural performance tables for all four countries can be found in the related research reports; see footnote 4.
7. Uganda's agricultural success is not particularly evident in figures from other sources, and yield figures for maize can be seriously questioned as there are large discrepancies between FAO and 'local' figures.
8. See <https://openaccess.leidenuniv.nl/handle/1887/20017>.

## CHAPTER 7

1. Senior Research Fellow, Politics and Governance, Overseas Development Institute, London.
2. Evans (2004), Grindle (2007), Moore and Unsworth (2010), Sundaram and Chowdhury (2012) and Levy (2014).
3. Amsden (1989).
4. Evans (1995).
5. Robinson and White (1998), Woo-Cumings (1999), Leftwich (2000), Kohli (2004) and Edigheji (2010).
6. Portes (2005).
7. Doner et al. (2005), Doner (2009), Slater (2010) and Vu (2010).
8. Routley (2014).
9. Khan (2010), North et al. (2009), Andrews (2013) and Andrews et al. (2013).
10. The word 'regime' is used deliberately, to allow a focus on issues lying somewhere between long term of state formation and the short term of particular government administrations. The proposed concept is more than a definition. Following Goertz's (2006) elucidation of the function of social science concepts, it incorporates causal claims about the entity to which it refers, in this instance about the features that help to produce valued development outcomes and those that do not.
11. Van Donge and Henley (2012), Vlasblom (2013) and Henley (2015).
12. Johnston and Mellor (1961).

13. Breisinger and Diao (2008), Hazell et al. (2010), Losch et al. (2012) and Dorosh and Mellor (2013).
14. Chang (2003), Reinert (2007), Noman and Stiglitz (2012) and Whitfield (2012).
15. Lin (2012).
16. Lin (2013) and Wiggins and Keats (2014).
17. Henley (2010).
18. p. 171, citing Evans (1998) and Ohno and Ohno (2012).
19. Andrews (2013) and Andrews et al. (2013).
20. Fuady (2013) and Henley (2013).
21. Pritchett et al. (2010).
22. Khan (1995).
23. Parks and Cole (2010: 5, emphasis removed).
24. Khan (2012).
25. Laws (2012).
26. Lindemann (2008) and Call (2012).
27. Khan (2010).

## CHAPTER 8

1. Research Fellow, Overseas Development Institute.
2. Independent researcher, Kampala and Kigali.
3. Brown et al. (2010) and Moore et al. (2009).
4. Fuller details are given in Booth and Golooba-Mutebi (2014a).
5. Andrews (2013).
6. Henley (2010).
7. Khan (Khan, 1995).
8. Booth and Golooba-Mutebi (2014b).
9. Golooba-Mutebi and Booth (2013).
10. Kelsall (2013b: 35-42).
11. Posner (2005) and Keefer (2011).
12. Gallagher (2005), Harrison (2010) and Reinert (2007).
13. Pritchett et al. (2010).
14. Johnston (2013).
15. Englebert and Tull (2010), Auteserre (2010) and Trefon (2011).
16. Mamdani (2013).
17. Putzel (2010).

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