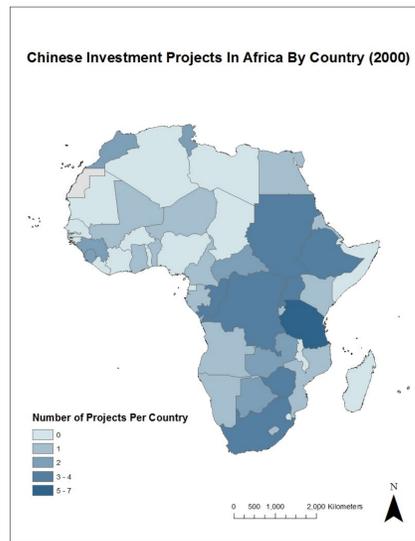


What is the Cost of a Vote?

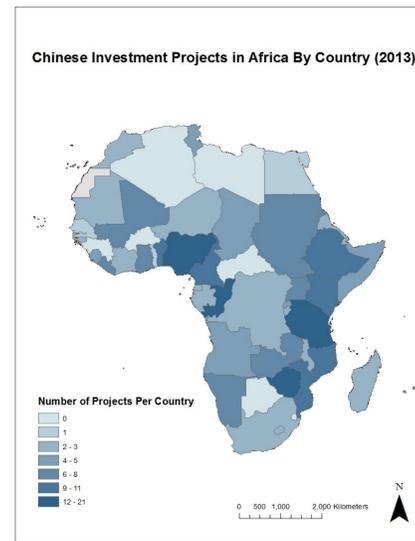
Does Increased Foreign Investment Really Buy Political Influence in Africa

Introduction

As Chinese investment continues to grow in Africa at staggering rates, the United States government has become increasingly concerned about the expansion of political influence that could result from these deepening ties. However, it is unclear if African voting records have actually shown a pivot towards China in recent years. By comparing levels of investment from both of these major powers in Africa and African nations' voting records in the United Nations General Assembly, it will be possible to determine if money really does buy political influence.



at least one project in every country in Africa, except for Libya during FY 2001. There was a fluctuation in the number of projects in several countries from FY 2001 to FY 2014. The country with the largest percentage increase in the number of projects was Cote d'Ivoire, which moved from seven activities in FY 2001 to 79 activities in FY 2014. Eritrea was the country with the largest percentage decrease in projects, moving from 85 projects in FY 2001 to 22 projects in FY 2014.



When examining the United Nations voting records for the 55th Session of the General Assembly (2000) and the 68th Session of the General Assembly (2013), there were numerous resolutions on which the United States and China took opposing positions. These issues of contention ranged from human rights to nuclear non-proliferation to sanctions to territorial sovereignty to policies towards Israel. For several different key resolutions during this time period, a vast majority of African nations voted in line with China both during the earlier 2000 session and during the 2013 session, following the increase in investment. The fact that African nations voted in line with China, even on issues like Israel that have no direct impact on them, is notable, but the information available does not seem to indicate that these voting allegiances are directly tied to an increase in spending. Additionally, it should be noted that while the US has a larger number of activities across the continent and has projects in countries that did not have any Chinese involvement during the two years analyzed, they still did not garner voting support from these countries in the General Assembly.

Techniques and Limitations

This analysis required joining national investment project data to African continental boundaries to explore trends in increases and decreases in investment. In order to compare UN

voting records, each nation's record was pulled and compared to the votes recorded from the United States and China for the resolution in question.

The main limitation in assessing increased investment is the different definitions that the United States and China use for a "project". While it would have been preferable to compare based on the dollar amount invested, this data was not available for all of China's projects during this period.

Another limitation was culling through the United Nations General Assembly data to determine which UN Resolutions were the most relevant for consideration. Future exploration of this subject would benefit from looking at an even broader sample size of resolutions.

Conclusions

While it is clear that Chinese investment in Africa during the 21st century has seen a steep increase, US investment in Africa has also increased at a notable level and the United States began projects in many African countries during the years analyzed where the Chinese had not initiated any projects. United Nations General Assembly voting records on key resolutions do not indicate a strong correlation between investment and voting allegiances. A majority of African nations seem to have voted in line with Chinese preferences during the two years considered, independent of investment levels or US involvement in the countries in question.

References

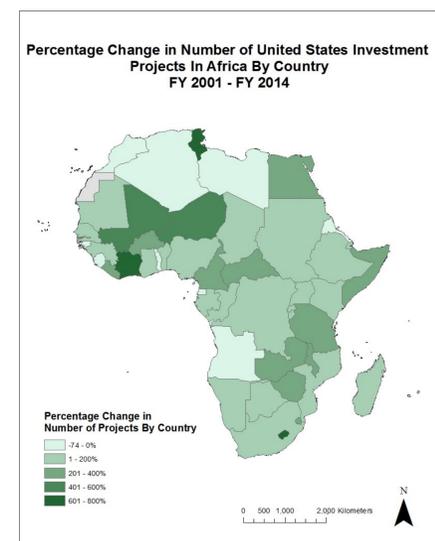
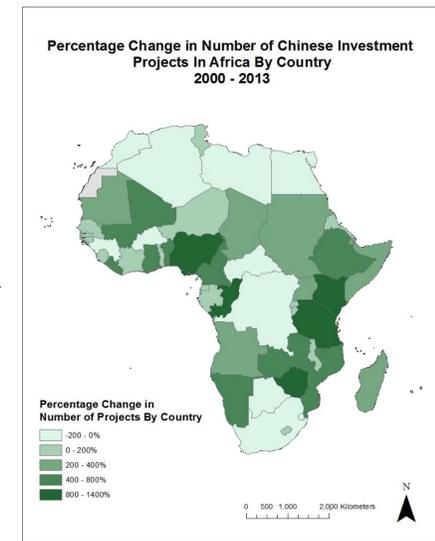
Data Sources: Tracking Chinese Development Finances - AidData (2014), Foreign Aid Explorer - USAID (2016), United Nations General Assembly Voting Data - Erik Voeten (2014)

Cartographer: Kaitlyn Neuberger

Course: DPH-P207

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Geographic Coordinate System: THE FLETCHER SCHOOL
GCS WGS 1984

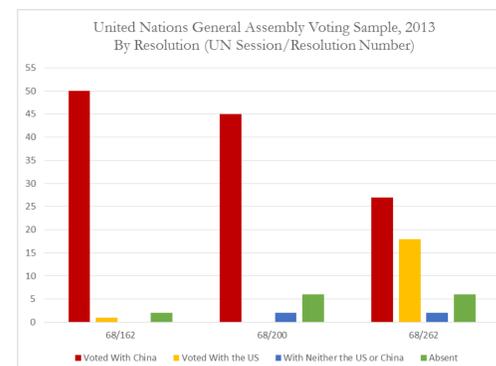
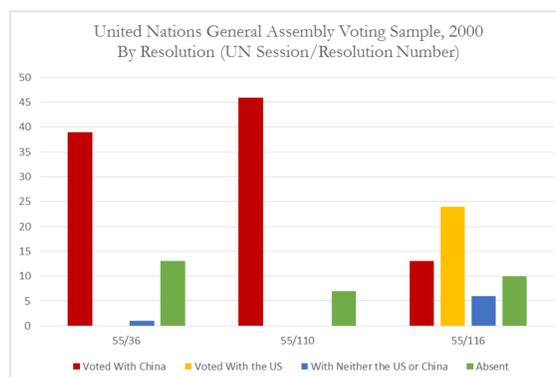
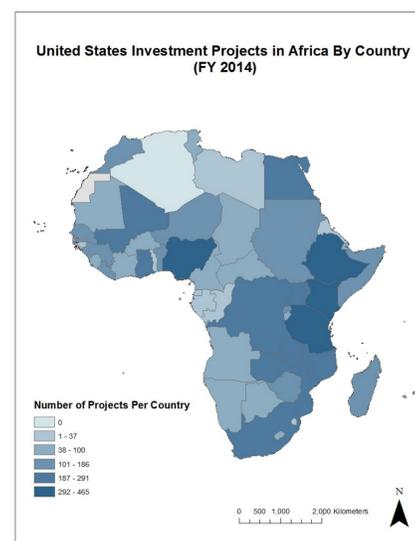
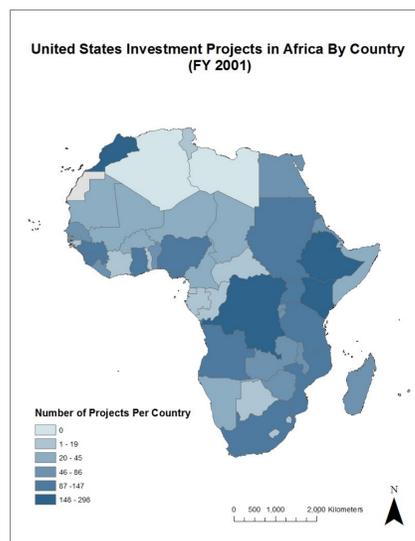


Research Questions

- In what countries did the number of investment projects from China increase in the time period from 2000 to 2013?
- In what countries did the number of investment projects from the United States increase in the time period from FY 2001 to FY 2014?
- Do African countries more regularly vote with China or the United States during United Nations General Assembly votes where the two countries votes diverge?
- Does the voting allegiance of African countries change with an increased number of investment projects?

Project Results

The number of initiated Chinese investment projects in African countries increased markedly from 66 projects to 249 projects in the time between 2000 and 2013. Most countries saw an increase or at least a sustained level of projects during this time period with only Botswana, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, and Guinea experiencing a decrease in the number of projects. Benin saw the largest percent increase from one project in 2000 to nine projects in 2013.



American investment is tracked by fiscal year, with the closest fiscal years for comparison being FY 2001 and FY 2014. During these two years, the United States had