



**Emerging Donors in International Development
Assistance:**

The South Africa Case

This is a summary of a research report prepared by:

The South African Institute of International Affairs

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**One of five reports on the role played by emerging economies in funding
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Executive Summary

In keeping with its surging economic growth and regional influence, South Africa has become an emerging donor that is increasingly involved in Africa as a development partner—largely via peacekeeping, post-conflict reconstruction, and research for development. South Africa's apartheid-era development assistance program, which sought to buy a measure of respect for the country, has been transformed by the advent of democratic rule in 1994 into an instrument to advance the so-called African Renaissance. South Africa has tried to avoid following traditional North-South donor hierarchies by fostering cooperative engagement with its African partners.

Development assistance is still a recent innovation embedded within the broad framework of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and the vision of an African Renaissance. As such, South Africa has no centralized agency to manage the country's burgeoning development assistance programs. Assistance is provided through the African Renaissance Fund of the Department of Foreign Affairs; a variety of government departments [especially Defence, Education, South African Police Services (under the Department of Safety and Security), Foreign Affairs, Minerals and Energy, and Trade and Industry]; and parastatals, government agencies, and other statutory bodies.

South Africa has no systematic database to track the country's development assistance, no separate financial reporting lines for development projects, no overall government strategy to direct aid, and no generic operating guidelines (outside of the African Renaissance Fund) to facilitate the overall provision of aid. However, suggestions have been made recently by the ruling African National Congress to create a South African International Development Agency (SAIDA), which would be located within the Department of Foreign Affairs.

Inspired by the idea of African Renaissance, South Africa's development assistance is directed almost entirely toward other African nations, and focuses on general improvements in governance, and on local priorities such as conflict prevention, resolution, and remediation. Within Africa itself, the bulk of South African's development assistance (some 70 percent) is focused on South African Development Community member states. Implicitly, security concerns are a priority and peacekeeping is a key element of South Africa's assistance efforts.

Development assistance activities for 2006 amount to between US\$363 million and US\$475 million, or 0.18 percent of GDP. The Department of Defence (55 percent) and the Department of Education (36 percent) accounted for the bulk of these expenditures. Assistance is not formally tied; however, most projects rely on South African inputs (skilled labour and technology), which form integral parts of project activities.

Research for development is a small component of South African development assistance and is structured under the Department of Science and Technology (DST) and its family of affiliated institutions: the National Research Fund (NRF), the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), the Africa Institute of South Africa (AISA), and the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC).

Most research for development directly involves South African personnel, but the country provides very little, if any, direct funding. Although not tied formally, research for development projects typically involve South African inputs in collaborative endeavours based on specific expertise and capacity. For instance, South Africa participates in programs and projects of NEPAD as part of the African Union's (AU) Science and Technology Consolidated Plan of Action. In some cases, South Africa also provides practical support by hosting the secretariats and headquarters of NEPAD/AU science and technology programs and by providing facilities for their operations.

Since 2000, South Africa has increasingly experimented with tripartite partnerships, collaborating with a traditional donor to deliver development assistance to a recipient country (usually in Africa). Although each party's roles and responsibilities vary from case to case, these arrangements enable South Africa to play an increasing role in the continent without

incurring high costs or engendering resentment from its neighbours. In fact, many donors consider South Africa a valuable partner because of its location, culture, history, and identity.

While several such partnerships are being developed, trilateral partnerships with multilateral agencies and institutions are not yet common. As such, there are no policies to direct trilateral cooperation. Individual departments establish trilateral partnerships with little overall coordination with other departments and agencies. However, to help formalize such efforts, the South African National Treasury drafted a trilateral policy in early 2007.

The limited number of bilateral and trilateral research for development projects in Africa, compared to the larger number of traditional projects, has been ascribed to the limited number of African governments and departments that request and can carry out research for development partnerships. The majority of projects appear to be implemented either by using donor funds and South African expertise or co-funded by donors and South Africa, and using South African expertise. Partnering occurs with university departments and research affiliates.

Much could be done to improve the tracking and assessment of South African development assistance. The country's development assistance is highly decentralized and can in no way be described as a single national program. However, if the country's development assistance were monitored, coordinated, and channelled, its impact and effectiveness could be vastly improved and it could play an enormous role in enhancing South Africa's role and profile on the continent.

Despite this challenge, South Africa's contribution to development assistance (as a percentage of GNI) is equal to that of several leading developing nations. And with the recommendations of the ANC Policy Conference and the support of the National Treasury to further formalize development assistance, it appears that South Africa's activity as a development partner will increase rapidly. The challenge for South Africa is to manage the evolution of its development assistance in a way that mitigates some of the negative perceptions and concerns about the country's motives on the continent, while advancing peace, stability, and development, and increasing its political leverage and furthering its commercial interests.

This report consists of seven main sections. The first provides a historical overview of South Africa's development assistance programs. The second and third sections provide an overview of the institutional mechanisms, components and disbursement patterns of South African development assistance, while the fourth and fifth sections shed light on the institutional mechanisms, components and disbursement patterns of South Africa's aid specifically focused on research for development. This is followed by an examination of the international linkages in South Africa's development assistance and research for development programs in the sixth and seventh sections.

1. A Short History of South African Development Assistance

The advent of democracy in South Africa in 1994 led to a transformation of the country's relations with other countries in Africa. Since then, South Africa's foreign policy has elevated the country's relationship with other African nations to one of primary importance. As such, South Africa hopes, through its experiences, economic power, and institutional and skills base, to play a significant role as a driver of growth, human capacity, and political freedom on the continent. South Africa's engagement with the continent rests on three pillars: strengthening Africa's institutions, regionally and continentally; supporting implementation of Africa's socioeconomic development program, the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD); and improving bilateral political and socioeconomic relations through dialogue and cooperation.

Development assistance prior to 2000

South African development assistance originated with largely ineffectual efforts by the apartheid regime to support several African countries (Lesotho, Gabon, Cote d'Ivoire, Equatorial Guinea, and Comoros) and Paraguay, which enjoyed strong links with South Africa. This effort was part of South Africa's attempt to win friends and buy votes at the United Nations. Development assistance, which fell largely under the Economic Co-operation Promotion Loan Fund Act, 1968 (as amended by the Economic Co-operation Promotion Loan Fund Amendment Act, 1986), was also used to offer support to the so-called Homelands—unviable mini-states created to support the fiction that black South Africans had places in which they could express themselves politically.

Institutionally, this support was granted through the Development Assistance Program, which was situated in a Chief Directorate in the Department of Foreign Affairs. The program consisted of direct project-related development assistance, with little or no research for development. Officials in the department note that the program responded to direct requests for assistance from recipient nations and the Homelands. With respect to the Homelands, however, the program would have been a component of the overall domestic political agenda of the time.

Development assistance after 2000

The Development Assistance Program continued to operate after the first democratic elections of 1994, but no longer included assistance to the Homelands, as these mini-states were dissolved and reincorporated into South Africa following the negotiated transition. As the political context in South Africa changed with the onset of democracy, the country no longer tied its development assistance. At the end of 2000, however, the program was shut down and replaced by the current African Renaissance and International Co-operation Fund, or African Renaissance Fund (ARF) as it is commonly known.

The African Renaissance and International Co-operation Fund Act (Act No 51 of 2000) was adopted on January 22, 2001. The preamble of the act states that the ARF was established to enhance cooperation between South Africa and other countries—in particular, African countries—through the promotion of democracy, good governance, the prevention and resolution of conflict, socioeconomic development and integration, humanitarian assistance, and human resource development. The ARF was also conceived to enable the smooth transition between the development assistance activities of the previous regime and the democratic government.

The ARF, however, comprises only a small percentage of the total amount of South African development assistance—3.8 percent in 2002 and 3.3 percent in 2004¹. The bulk of the assistance undertaken since 2000 has been conducted by various government departments. In fact, at least half of all national government departments are engaged in a range of projects on the continent.² As such, although the value of the ARF has grown considerably since its inception, it is still dwarfed by the activities conducted by government departments. In fact, if

¹ See section below on disbursements for further details.

² Interview data, July 2007.

these departmental activities are added to those of other statutory bodies such as the Independent Electoral Commission, parastatals, and government-funded and -affiliated bodies such as the Human Sciences Research Council, then the proportion represented by the ARF is even smaller.

A development partner

South Africa wishes to be referred to as a development partner and not as a donor or an emerging donor. The term 'development partner' is used because of South Africa's sensitivity to the continent's perception that South Africa may be replicating the role of a dominant economy in colonial relations, and because South Africa is also a recipient of aid and development assistance. Indeed, South African officials argue that their country's thinking about the role it wishes to play in the developing world is still evolving.³

³ Interview data, July 2007.

2. Institutional Overview of South African Development Assistance

South African development assistance is controlled by groups in three areas: primary institutions, coordinating agencies, and executive functions.

Primary institutions

No central agency manages development assistance in South Africa. Instead, three government groupings—the African Renaissance Fund (ARF); government departments; and parastatals, government agencies, and other statutory bodies—carry out development assistance. What is more, South Africa has no systematic database to track the country's development assistance; no separate financial reporting lines for development projects; no overall government strategy to direct aid; and no generic operating guidelines (outside of the ARF) to facilitate the overall provision of aid. This apparent gap exists despite the fact that dozens of departments, agencies, and parastatals are involved in providing assistance to other African states. A sense of the institutional structure is provided in Figure 1.

As a result of this dispersion of operations and a lack of institutional memory on the subject, there is no way to determine the implications and impact of assistance provided by South Africa. In addition, it is difficult for researchers to obtain precise information on the extent and nature of South African development assistance granted to other African nations.⁴

The ARF is the most visible component of South African development assistance, even though it constitutes a small portion of overall development assistance in financial terms. Regulated by an act of Parliament, the ARF is located within the Department of Foreign Affairs and falls under the NEPAD Directorate, due to the ARF's alignment with NEPAD projects. Although the bulk of its funding is made through grants, the ARF also makes concessional loans and grants.

Authority for South African development assistance is spread across several government departments,⁵ with almost a dozen departments managing a variety of projects. A number of primary government departments, however, can be identified:

- Defence,
- Education,
- South African Police Services (under Department of Safety and Security),
- Minerals and Energy, and
- Trade and Industry.

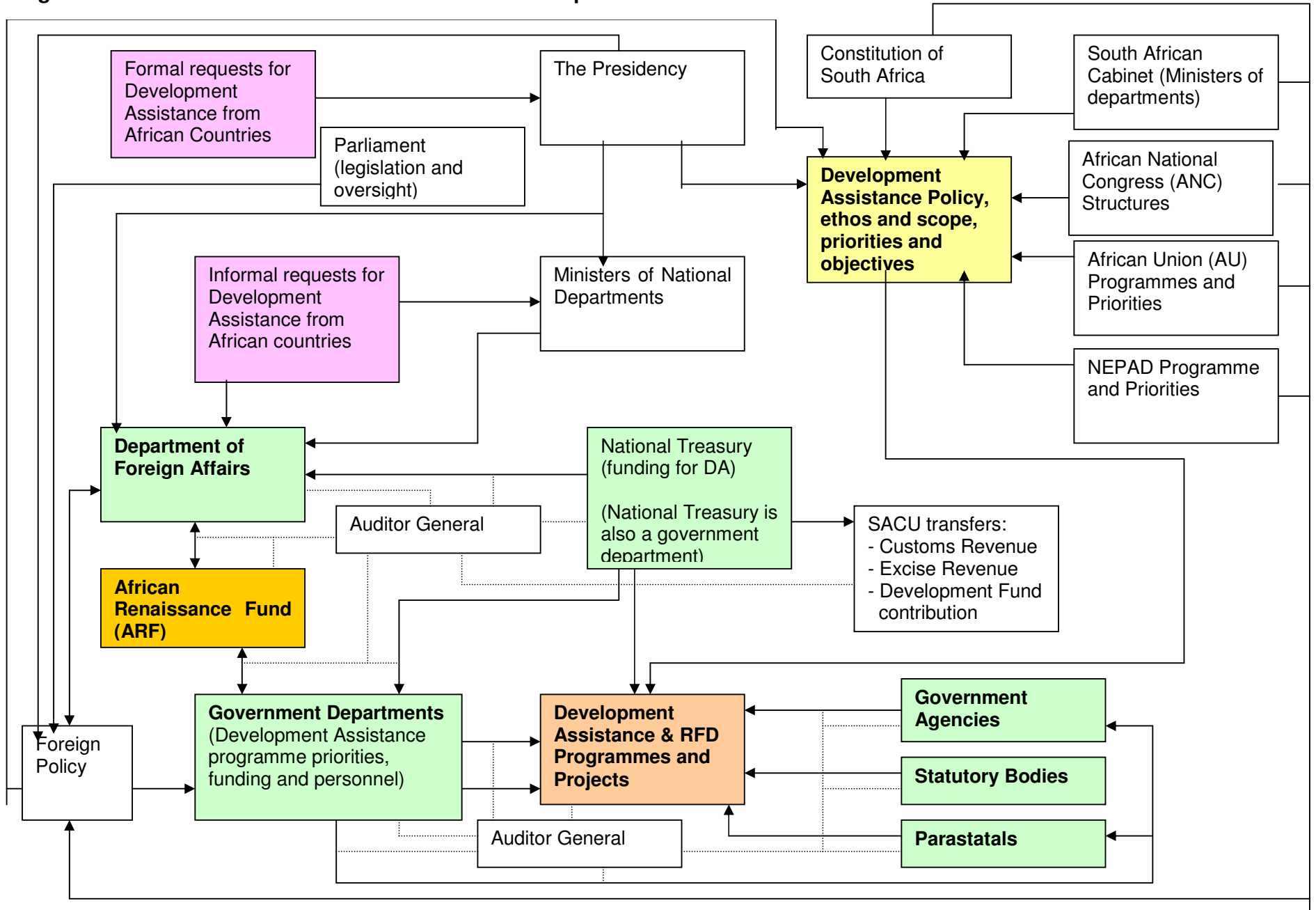
Other government departments involved in providing development assistance to African nations include:

- Justice and Constitutional Development,
- Arts and Culture,
- Public Service and Administration,
- Public Enterprises,
- Public Works,
- Science and Technology, and
- Agriculture.

⁴ Interview data, July 2007.

⁵ Departments that focus on research for development (some provide traditional development assistance and research for development) are repeated later in this report in the section on research for development.

Figure 1: Institutional Structure of South African Development Assistance



In addition to these lead departments, a number of parastatals and other statutory bodies have played or are playing significant roles in extending assistance to other African countries. These institutions include:

- Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA)⁶,
- Independent Electoral Commission (IEC),
- Industrial Development Corporation (IDC),
- Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC),
- National Research Fund (NRF), and
- SA Management Development Institute (SAMDI).

Coordinating agencies

South Africa has yet to establish an overall coordinating structure for its development assistance to other African nations. However, the country tracks funds from external development partners earmarked for South African development. This tracking is performed by the Development Co-operation Information System (DCIS), a database maintained by the International Development Co-operation Chief Directorate (IDC CD), which is located in the National Treasury. IDC CD will likely construct a similar system to monitor development assistance from South Africa to other nations.

In June 2007, participants to a policy conference of the country's ruling party endorsed creation of a South African International Development Agency (SAIDA), which would control a development aid fund and be located within the Department of Foreign Affairs, which would be renamed the Department of Foreign Relations and International Cooperation (the DFR & IC).

The concept is believed to have the support of National Treasury officials; however, this new agency would not be in place for another five years. As such, National Treasury officials noted that interim measures would need to be implemented to immediately improve oversight of development assistance. These interim measures could include:

- expansion of the ARF⁷ or introduction to other departments of oversight measure under which the ARF operates, and;
- strengthened and expanded appropriation legislation to cover departmental development assistance activities in Africa (such as amending the Public Finance Management Act).

Executive functions

The African Renaissance Fund is controlled by the Director General of Foreign Affairs. The Director General reports to the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Minister reports to the Cabinet. An Advisory Committee makes recommendations to the ministers of Foreign Affairs and Finance on the disbursement of funds. The Advisory Committee includes the Director General of Foreign Affairs, three members nominated by the Minister of Foreign Affairs and two members nominated by the Minister of Finance. In practice, however, ARF officials are sometimes asked to alter ARF procedures to satisfy requests from senior officials and ministers.⁸

Each government department is managed by a Director General. Although ministers must account to Parliament and the Cabinet on departmental activities, reporting appears to be done on an ad hoc basis. For instance, Parliament does not have a committee to oversee development assistance. Such oversight would be performed by the committee on foreign affairs.

⁶ The DBSA's vision is of a prosperous and integrated region progressively free of poverty and dependency. Its mission statement is to advance development impact in the region by expanding access to development finance and effectively integrating and implementing sustainable development solutions. The strategy is focused on the Development Bank acting as a catalyst, integrator, centre of excellence and strategic implementer (www.dbsa.org)

⁷ This expansion is occurring already. The ARF's operating budget has tripled since 2003.

⁸ Interview data, July 2007.

Parastatals, government agencies, and other statutory bodies report to their respective senior management and boards or to a Director General and Minister if the body is affiliated with—or receives funding from—a government department. Financial and operational reporting is clearer within the ARF due to its nature as a specific unit responsible for development assistance. The ARF is also subject to audits by the Office of the Auditor-General, a government unit with financial oversight responsibility for all government expenditures.

In terms of reporting by government departments, two types of institutional reporting can be described: reporting internally to departments and reporting externally to departments. Both forms consist of two parts: financial reporting and general reporting on the nature of activities and their impact. Internally, each South African government department reports to a Director General. Externally, ministers report to the Cabinet and thus to the President. Government departments are also required to submit reports to relevant parliamentary committees and provide information when officially requested by members of Parliament during parliamentary sessions.

Although formal financial reporting structures exist for all departmental expenditures, spending on development assistance is difficult to track (whether by departmental financial officers, the Auditor-General,⁹ or by the National Treasury) as it is often included under a variety of budget lines.¹⁰ In fact, departments do not have separate budget lines for development assistance and are not required to report on this kind of spending.¹¹ In addition to these challenges, no processes exist to measure the impact of South African development assistance.

As a result, no clear picture of South Africa's development assistance efforts is evident within departments, let alone across the entire government. Respondents believe that this situation could be remedied by creating detailed procedures within departments to control the appropriation of funds for development assistance and tightening up overall appropriation procedures. Apparently, such efforts are underway.

Development assistance provided by the South African National Defence Force (SANDF) and the South African Police Services (SAPS), however, are clearly reported in the country's Annual Defence Year Report and the Annual SAPS Year Report.

Financing frameworks and mechanisms for development assistance

All formal requests for development assistance must be approved by the Presidency and the National Treasury. In many cases, South Africa uses memoranda of understanding (MOU) to establish development partnerships with other African countries. In other instances, bilateral treaties are negotiated. These treaties sometimes establish binational commissions to examine social, economic, and political cooperation. Although these MOUs and treaties are usually lodged with the Legal Affairs Section of the Department of Foreign Affairs, government departments and agencies do not always inform the Department of Foreign Affairs of all development assistance activity.

The ARF acts upon bilateral requests for assistance from recipient nations. These requests are channelled through government ministers and the Presidency. The ARF disburses funds via two processes:

Loans and other financial assistance are granted in accordance with agreements between the parties and project proposals, and upon recommendation of the Advisory Committee and approval by the Minister of Foreign Affairs after consultation with the Minister of Finance. Funds used to promote democracy and good governance, and to prevent and resolve conflict are granted by the Minister of Foreign Affairs upon recommendation of the Advisory Committee and approval by the Minister of Finance.

⁹ The ARF underwent two audits. In 2001, the Auditor General examined old, non-performing long-term loans made by the organization's predecessor. In 2004-2005 and 2005-2006, the Auditor General examined a payment made by Sports and Recreation South Africa to the 2002 Africa Cup of Nations soccer tournament in Mali. The report noted problems with tendering and invoicing but did not recommend any punitive measures.

¹⁰ Interview data, August 2007.

¹¹ Some departmental officials suggested creating a system of such budget lines. Interview data, 2007.

Departments often use MOUs and treaties to formalize their interaction with counterpart departments and bodies in other countries. Although country-to-country agreements must be approved by Presidency and the National Treasury, some development assistance projects are undertaken without presidential approval. These initiatives, however, fall under overall agreements that have been approved by the National Treasury and the Presidency. Although departments use general budgets to fund development assistance, the Department of Defence has a special Peacekeeping Fund that is allocated by the National Treasury.

3. Components and Disbursement Patterns of South African Development Assistance

The African Renaissance agenda drives all development assistance activities and programs of South Africa's government departments, agencies, and groups. The African Renaissance Fund (ARF) supports projects in the four areas of the African Renaissance agenda: poverty alleviation, economic development, security, and stability. Development assistance to other African countries takes the form of cooperative projects and direct assistance to specific sectoral initiatives and not general core budgetary support.

The ARF represents only a portion of the development assistance initiatives. The organization, however, does express the government's vision and thinking in terms of development assistance. More specifically, the ARF enables the government to identify and fund:

- cooperation between South Africa and other African countries,
- promotion of democracy and good governance,
- conflict prevention and resolution,
- socioeconomic development and integration,
- humanitarian assistance, and
- human resource development.

Although the focus of the ARF has been broad, the organization is apparently shifting its funding to infrastructure development projects. The ARF also views support for capacity-building projects as a priority and provides seed funding to these initiatives. For example, South Africa donated R6.6 million through the ARF to geochemical and hydrological projects of the Lesotho Ministry of Natural Resources. The money was part of an assistance package provided under the Joint Bilateral Commission of Cooperation, a cooperation agreement signed by the countries' heads of government in 2001.¹²

NEPAD is also a central component of South Africa's policy framework for development assistance. In fact, NEPAD, which can best be summarized as a vision and strategic framework for Africa's renewal, could be regarded as a proxy for a national development assistance policy framework. NEPAD will continue to occupy this role, and its objectives, principles, and priorities will continue to influence South Africa's development assistance activity.

The overall thrust of South African development assistance appears to be directed toward African renewal rather than a means to boost trade. Indeed, existing trade with most recipients of South African development assistance is not significant when compared to trade flows between South Africa and its non-African trading partners.

Further examples of the broad focus on African renewal are the government's willingness to fund activities such as the African Cup of Nations (R30 million) and the Pan-African Parliament (R113 million), and the country's willingness to write-off some R43 million in unrecoverable long-term loans made to developing countries in Africa.¹³

Overall priorities for government departments and agencies are set by the Department of Foreign Affairs, which has established NEPAD implementation as a central priority for relations with other African countries. Each department then develops its own policy priorities within this foreign policy framework. South Africa also works with a number of United Nations agencies and multilateral organizations, such as UNDP, UNIDO, WHO, FAO, and WFP, as well as NGOs such as the Red Cross.

¹² The JBCC aims to assist Lesotho's economic development so that the country can graduate from its Least Developed Country status.

¹³ Some R43 million in non-recoverable long-term loans were converted to grants. These loans were granted to Comoros, Gabon, Lesotho, Mozambique, Malawi, Paraguay, Central Africa, and Swaziland. The researcher could not ascertain the exact dates of the loans.

Priority recipients

South Africa does not have a policy to prioritize recipients. The pattern of activity, however, suggests that a key focus is assistance to help countries make the transition from conflict to peace. This emphasis can be seen in South Africa's significant practical and political involvement in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Burundi, and Sudan, and to a lesser extent in Liberia and the Ivory Coast. This conflict-related assistance is often followed by assistance from other South African government bodies. In effect, peacekeeping activity paves the way for more diverse forms of development assistance.

Private-sector groups are usually on the ground before peacekeeping support begins. For example, South African companies have operated for a long time in the DRC. Clearly, South Africa has a vested interest in promoting peace in that country—not only because of the presence of many South African companies, but also to unlock the enormous energy potential of new hydroelectric power projects on the Inga River. Such power stations could meet all of southern and eastern Africa's power needs and enable the DRC to export power to North Africa and Europe.

Disbursement patterns

Exact figures for South African development assistance are not available. Even government officials are unaware of these figures due to the limitations in reporting. There is no systematic database that tracks South African development assistance.

According to a 2006 National Treasury study, overall transfers and assistance to African countries (including transfers to the Southern African Customs Union, or SACU) by the National Treasury and the one-third of departments who responded to the survey, increased by approximately 26 percent annually from 2002 to 2004 (R9.5 billion to R15.2 billion). With only partial information available for 2006-2007, actual and pledged transfers to Africa (including SACU member states) appear to have increased by 25 percent to R19 billion or US\$2.79 billion.

ARF spending was R50 million in 2003-2004 and 2004-2005, R100 million in 2005-2006, R150 million in 2006-2007, and R215 million in 2007-2008. The estimated allocation by the Department of Foreign Affairs in 2008-2009 is R275.9 million. Departmental officials note that the steady increases are meant to recapitalize and expand the ARF, whose funds are kept with the South African Reserve Bank.

The ARF 2004-2005 report noted the following beneficiaries and amounts:

African Renaissance Fund Grants – 2004-2005

Grant	Value (R'000)
Institution and capacity-building project for Southern Sudan	7,100
Burundi peace process	10,000
DRC pre-election public-support program	3,500
South African women in dialogue	3,500
Zimbabwe parliamentary election observers	5,000
DRC post-conflict reconstruction and development	25,000
Total Grants	54,100

Source: *African Renaissance Fund Annual Report: 2004-2005*

The ARF 2005-2006 report noted the following beneficiaries and amounts:

African Renaissance Fund Grants – 2005-2006

Grant	Value (R'000)
Africa Institute of South Africa, Terrorism Commission	1,700
Liberian disarmament and elections	25,750
Independent Electoral Commission, DRC Observer Mission	11,000
Humanitarian assistance to the Western Sahara (SADR)	10,000
DRC pre-election support	10,000
DPSA	1,400
Total Grants	59,850

Source: *African Renaissance Fund Annual Report: 2005-2006*

Southern African Customs Union transfers

The Southern African Customs Union (SACU) consists of South Africa, Botswana, Namibia, Lesotho, and Swaziland. A Common Monetary Area (CMA)¹⁴ also exists among South Africa, Namibia, Lesotho, and Swaziland. Under the terms of the renegotiated 2002 SACU Agreement,¹⁵ the SACU customs pool is divided according to a formula based mainly on trade within the SACU. Since South Africa exports much more to its neighbours than it imports from them, the revenue split strongly favours the other states. South Africa currently receives around 10 percent of the intra-SACU customs pool. The excise pool is divided differently—about 85 percent of funds go to South Africa, but it is a smaller pool than the customs revenue pool.

The revenue distribution essentially functions as follows: all customs, excise, and additional trade duties collected in the common customs areas are paid into a revenue pool. The cost of funding the SACU bodies is subtracted from this revenue and the remainder is divided up in three components:

Customs revenue is divided according to each member state's share in intra-SACU imports. A development fund is supported by 15 percent of excise revenues, which are distributed almost equally, with roughly 20 percent of the fund going to each SACU member state. South Africa's contribution to the development fund is approximately R2 billion.¹⁶ The remainder of the excise pool is divided among member states in proportion to their share of the SACU GDP.

The National Treasury notes that SACU and CMA financial transfers accounted for 87 percent of overall transfers to Africa in 2004. Inclusion of such transfers is apparently normal practice among international donors in reporting overall international aid—although it would probably

¹⁴ The CMA is based on the South African Rand, to which the currencies of Namibia, Lesotho, and Swaziland are pegged.

¹⁵ The new arrangement is a more democratic one, giving small states a greater say in the operation of the customs union. A secretariat was also established for the first time.

¹⁶ Researcher's calculation corroborated by figures taken from Flatters and Stern, 2006: 16.

be counted under the OECD's Development Assistance Committee definitions as other official flows (OOF) and not official development assistance (ODA). These OOF transfers are not meant for development, but they are still directed to developing countries.

It can be argued, however, that SACU transfers do not count as OOF, with the possible exception of the development fund. Indeed, they are partly made up of actual customs and excise revenue that would accrue to the states concerned even without the customs union, although at a much lower level.

The non-SACU, non-CMA transfers, which would comprise development assistance activities by traditional definitions, would account for only 13 percent (R1.976 billion) of the R15.2 billion total. This figure includes all research for development activities. If this figure were increased by 25 percent (in line with the projected overall 2005-2006 increase noted above), then it would be in the range of R2.47 billion.¹⁷

However, the calculation above is itself far from complete. The data are based on information collected from only one-third of all government departments. The missing data, therefore, would include development assistance from:

- the remaining two-thirds of government departments,
- parastatals such as Eskom and Telkom,
- statutory bodies such as the Independent Electoral Commission,
- fully or partially funded government agencies such as the CSIR, and
- politically and institutionally affiliated but financially autonomous government agencies such as the IDC and DBSA.

An estimate of the proportion of development assistance unaccounted for in the 2006 National Treasury study's findings is as much as another 30 percent. As such, South African development assistance may have totalled R3.211 billion in 2006. Using IMF GDP estimates for 2006, this total would comprise 0.18 percent of GDP. If the estimated South African contribution to the SACU development component (R2 billion in 2006) were included, this total would rise to R5 billion, or 0.29 percent of South Africa's 2006 GDP (R1.726 billion).¹⁸

Future levels of development assistance

In the discussion document on international relations prepared for its June 2007 policy conference, the African National Congress proposed that South Africa's development assistance be in a range of 0.2 to 0.5 percent of GDP. This policy, if implemented, would place South African development assistance above the aid disbursements of most developing countries. In practical terms, and using the data and estimates provided above, this policy would entail a doubling or tripling of current levels of development assistance. If the current level is 0.18 percent of GDP or R3.211 billion, then the middle of the proposed range could be reached by doubling the present development assistance from 0.18 to 0.36 percent (from R3.211 billion to R6.422 billion).

Sectoral disbursement patterns

The Department of Defence (55 percent) and Department of Education (36 percent) accounted for the bulk of the non-SACU/CMA expenditure of R1.976 billion in 2004 (exact percentages uncertain). The other nine percent was split between the remaining government departments featured in the National Treasury's 2006 study: Agriculture, Justice and Constitutional Development, Arts and Culture, Public Service and Administration, Public Works, SAPS, National Treasury (research for development assistance), Minerals and Energy, and Trade and Industry. For example, the Department of Agriculture and Land Affairs, and the Department of Foreign Affairs each provided more than R50 million in development assistance in 2004.¹⁹

In terms of sectoral distribution, peacekeeping and education activities and subsidies are the main areas of support, each receiving more than R500 million in 2004. Training and technical

¹⁷ Researcher's calculation.

¹⁸ Researcher's calculations.

¹⁹ National Treasury presentation to SAIIA, December 2006.

assistance comprise by far the highest number of discrete projects, although they do not constitute significant individual amounts.²⁰

Humanitarian assistance

South African humanitarian aid has generally been more than US\$1 million or nearly R7 million (2006 value) since 1997-1998. The South African National Treasury, however, approved a special allocation of R170 million to the World Food Programme (WFP) to provide assistance to Mali in 2002-2003, R100 million in 2003-2004 and R140 million in 2005-2006.²¹

The bulk of South Africa's humanitarian assistance is provided through the United Nations; the remainder goes through the African Union (AU), the Red Cross, and via bilateral assistance. A fairly large proportion of this assistance is provided to African countries, although assistance also has been provided to Turkey, Cuba, and the Palestinian Authority.

Support to African countries from 1995 to 1999 averaged 35 percent of overall aid; from 2000 to 2005, it averaged 53 percent of total aid flows. If this trend continues, these figures indicate that general humanitarian aid will amount to more than R13 million in 2007-2008 and R14 million in 2008-2009.²²

Geographic disbursement patterns

South Africa's development assistance has always been directed largely toward Africa, even in the apartheid years. This trend has continued and the launch of NEPAD has entrenched it. This focus on Africa applies primarily to non-research for development activities. South Africa is even seen as having a comparative advantage as a development partner—in that it has a greater understanding of African contexts and needs by virtue of being an African country. The country's approach is described as one based on partnership and solidarity. However, it must be emphasized that the perception of South Africa in the rest of the continent may not always be positive, and South Africa is sensitive to criticism of its actions.

In general, assistance is provided to counterpart government agencies and departments in recipient nations. The assistance may be for direct support to NGOs, but it invariably falls under specific MOUs or bilateral agreements, and is directed via government bodies in recipient nations.

Within Africa, the bulk of South African's development assistance is focused on Southern African Development Community (SADC) member states. These countries received 96 percent of South African flows in 2004 (R14.592 billion) when SACU/CMA transfers are included, and close to 70 percent (R1.383 billion) when SACU transfers are excluded.

It is likely that this preponderance of flows toward SADC member states will continue. This focus makes sense politically and multilaterally, as SADC (and SACU) are the regional bodies to which South Africa belongs and SADC is seemingly keen to advance its regional integration project in the near future. At the recent 2007 session of AU heads of state in Ghana, South Africa reiterated its support for strengthening regional organizations as the only viable option capable of realizing the long-term goal of African continental unification.

Another geographical driver of disbursement, although a recent and relatively limited one, is the set of agreements reached between South Africa, India, and Brazil—commonly known as the IBSA agreements. These agreements cover collaborative initiatives and co-funding in a range of areas. The areas of assistance are trilateral research for development and not general development assistance. IBSA members fund research for development in each other's countries through an agreed fund. Although the value of the fund is small (US\$1 million), it may grow as the relationship evolves. In addition, IBSA has established the IBSA Fund to help the most disadvantaged of developing countries. Each country contributes US\$1 million to the fund each year.

²⁰ National Treasury presentation to SAIIA, December 2006.

²¹ The Rand fell steadily in value against the United States dollar from US\$0.28 in 1995 to US\$0.096 in 2002, before recovering again to US\$0.16 in 2004.

²² Researcher's compilation—DFA Budget Vote, 2006 and FAO Newsroom.

Types of development assistance projects

Examples of projects undertaken by South African government departments, agencies, and statutory bodies are provided below. However, the number of projects and initiatives is not fully known at present by government itself. A thorough, ongoing attempt to collate these projects has not yet been made.

The act that supports the ARF introduced a framework and basis for the South African government to identify and fund projects and programs aimed at six regulatory framework principles, namely: co-operation between South Africa and other countries, particularly African countries; the promotion of democracy and good governance; the prevention and resolution of conflict; socio-economic development and integration; humanitarian assistance, and; human resource development. These projects and programs are supported through the granting of loans or rendering of other financial assistance within the African Renaissance framework.²³

Involvement of government departments

The Department of Agriculture is largely engaged in capacity-building projects in Africa, often around issues of phyto and sanitary measures. These projects are usually collaborative, and funding is rarely given directly to other African countries for stand-alone projects.

The Reserve Bank has been involved in training Reserve Bank officials from the DRC. The National Treasury has training programs that involve treasury officials in the DRC and other African states.

The Department of Education offers support to African students as part of its obligations under the SADC Protocol on Education and Training. These student places are only for post-graduate study. The students pay fees at South African rates but are not charged a higher fee as foreign students. The department has also received requests to train science educators.

South Africa's military has been increasingly involved in lending support to the resolution of conflict on the continent and in stabilizing societies undertaking post-conflict negotiations. In addition, South Africa, as part of the AU and SADC, is involved in creating the African standby force, the regional SADC brigade, and the SADC national early-warning centre.

The South African National Defence Force, or SANDF, is currently involved in significant peacekeeping operations in the DRC, Burundi, and the Darfur region of Sudan. These interventions are in support of the UN mission in the DRC, and AU missions in Burundi and Darfur. The UN is paying for the DRC mission, but South Africa is largely paying for the Burundi and Darfur missions. South Africa is also assisting the Central African Republic with uniforms, logistics, and training for its military. The capacity of the SANDF to take on additional peacekeeping operations, however, is extremely limited—not due to funding constraints but to those of personnel.

The South African Police Services (SAPS), which falls under the Department of Safety and Security, has contributed personnel and support to many of the nations in Africa in which the SANDF has been involved. These operations are run through the SAPS national operations headquarters in South Africa. Operations have included observers in Darfur, and election monitoring in the DRC and Comoros.

The Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA) has been providing technical and limited financial support to various public-service reform processes in the DRC since 2005. These efforts include conducting a census of public servants, planning and managing human resources, and building effective service-delivery machinery. Additional projects include support to DRC's anti-corruption initiatives, as well as assistance in establishing a national public administration training institute. The DPSA is also helping southern Sudan build capacity in its public sector.

Much of South Africa's financial support for the AU and NEPAD is provided via the Department of Foreign Affairs. South Africa paid 15 percent of the total AU budget from

²³ A list of specific ARF projects and grants for 2005 and 2006 is provided later in this report.

January 2006, an increase from 8.2 percent. These contributions totalled R155 million in 2006 and R161 million in 2007, and are expected to increase to R172.5 million in 2008.

The Department of Science and Technology has an International Cooperation and Resources Program that aims to develop and monitor bilateral and multilateral relationships and agreements in science and technology to strengthen the NSI and enable a flow of knowledge, capacity, and resources into both South Africa and its African neighbours.

Involvement of parastatals, government agencies, and statutory bodies

A variety of other official entities engage in development assistance activities. For example, the Independent Electoral Commission supported electoral transitions in the DRC and Burundi with training, materials, and advisory personnel. The University of South Africa currently supports distance-learning projects in a number of African countries in response to demands for the training of local government officials in southern Sudan.

4. Institutional Overview of South African Research for Development

South Africa's research for development is largely structured under the Department of Science and Technology (DST) and its family of affiliated institutions: the National Research Fund (NRF), the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC), the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), and the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC). These implementing agencies sometimes operate in conjunction with South African embassies in recipient countries.

These institutions are highly regarded internationally. Indeed, the DST and its family of institutions have been involved in research partnerships with international bodies and multilateral institutions for decades. The research for development work currently underway builds on this tradition and these international networks.

A number of other government departments are also involved in activities that could be described as related to research for development. These departments include Health, Agriculture, Trade and Industry, and Minerals and Energy. The Department of Education is another department that has been involved in research for development through the training of teachers (especially science teachers) and academics.

Financing mechanisms for research for development

In most projects, research for development activity is collaborative, based in South Africa, and directly involves South African personnel. Very little, if any, direct funding for research for development is provided through grants or loans. The bulk of research for development projects appear to be funded by the DST and its affiliates. Detailed information on the processes and frameworks for financing could not be obtained.

In nearly all cases, however, funds would come from an institution's overall budget, which is usually made up of a mix of funding from the DST and funds from contract work.²⁴ DST affiliates also compete for South African government contracts. In fact, the South African government is the biggest client of many of these agencies.²⁵ Although a significant amount of contract work is apparently undertaken for African governmental clients (at the national and provincial government levels), this work does not count as development assistance.²⁶

²⁴ For example, the CSIR receives approximately one-third of its budget (some R400 million) from the state; the other R800 million comes from contract work.

²⁵ Interview data, July 2007.

²⁶ Contract work is also undertaken for NEPAD, foreign development agencies, and private-sector clients.

5. Components and Disbursement Patterns of South African Research for Development

South Africa has consciously chosen to align its foreign policy and development assistance with African needs and programs. The country also appears keen to use its technological and scientific capacity to add real momentum to various efforts at African renewal. As a result, Africa is a key priority for South Africa's research for development projects and programs. In fact, there are concrete initiatives underway that these projects can support. In some cases, South Africa also provides practical support by hosting the secretariats and headquarters of NEPAD/AU science and technology programs and by providing buildings, communication facilities, and support personnel to these programs.²⁷

Through the African Union (AU), South Africa developed the Africa's Science and Technology Consolidated Plan of Action.²⁸ Launched in 2007, the plan reaffirms the continent's commitment to collective action in the field of science and technology, and marks the start of a focused African process to strengthen scientific and technological capacities. The plan also emphasizes development of an African system of research and technological innovation by establishing capacity-building programs and a network of centres of excellence dedicated to research and development.

The Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) has aligned its activities with NEPAD/AU science and technology plans and is involved in the implementation of these programs, as well as the WAITRO Africa Regional Focal Point Workplan to promote collaboration among African research and technology organizations. Although the CSIR board decides how to allocate government funding, it is bound by the DST's established priorities. In fact, the CSIR maintains a close relationship with the DST and is guided by the DST's 10-Year Plan. External trends such as the OECD Science and Technology Review are also used as inputs.

The CSIR actively promotes collaborative research, knowledge transfer, and human capital development. The CSIR emphasizes applied research and technical skill transfers. Respondents noted that, in spite of this knowledge base and capacity, many requests from African countries are for assistance with existing technologies rather than explorative research. In many projects, South Africans act as expert advisors, but the projects are not built around the South Africans. CSIR staff includes many African scientists.

The National Research Fund (NRF) has set up a new unit dealing with Africa because of the increasing number of countries in Africa that it is interacting with. The NRF has been actively designing systems and processes to manage and facilitate its interaction with African states and stakeholders. Funding from the DST for such international science liaison activities has doubled in the past few years. This expansion has been partly due to the overall increase in research and development funding by the government as it seeks to reach a self-imposed target of one percent of GDP by 2008.

Priority recipients

No particular priority recipients were identified, although South African research for development projects focus on India, Brazil, and African countries. A large overlap exists between development assistance and countries in which South Africa has been involved in providing support to democratization and stabilization efforts (such as the Democratic Republic of Congo, Sudan, and Burundi). However, this overlap is less pronounced when it comes to research for development.²⁹ Unfortunately, it was not possible to access material to undertake an assessment of the quantity and patterns of research for development support; however, research for development would appear to comprise a minority of overall development assistance.

²⁷ For example, the CSIR hosts the Bio-Sciences Hub for SADC, which is under the NEPAD umbrella, the NEPAD science and technology office, and the NEPAD E-Schools project.

²⁸ *Africa's Science and Technology Consolidated Plan of Action* includes the decisions of the first African Ministerial Conference on Science and Technology held in Johannesburg in November 2003.

²⁹ Interviews with government respondents, July 2007.

Sectoral disbursement

The CSIR has participated in many of NEPAD's programs that involve market access and diversification, peace and security, water, energy, and materials sciences. These NEPAD programs are closely coordinated and integrated with those of the African Union. The African Union/NEPAD-sponsored African Science and Technology Consolidated Plan of Action outlines a number of flagship research and development programs and projects to be implemented. The South African government, through the CSIR and the DST, have been involved in these programs.

The programs are organized into clusters based on their relationships and potential of establishing interrelated networks of implementing institutions. The clusters are:

- biodiversity, biotechnology, and indigenous knowledge;
- energy, water, and desertification;
- material sciences, manufacturing, laser, and post-harvest technologies;
- information and communication technologies, space science, and technologies;
- and
- mathematical sciences.³⁰

Geographic disbursement

Research for development partnerships are more diverse geographically within Africa and include partnerships outside Africa. Although South Africa's research for development activities are more diversified geographically than traditional development assistance work, the influence of NEPAD is significant in locating a sizeable proportion of research for development within Africa. It appears that a large percentage of South Africa's research for development involvement in Africa is concentrated within the Southern African Development Community,³¹ although overall research for development relationships are spread across the continent.

South Africa's research for development efforts outside of Africa occur largely via IBSA-sponsored initiatives or contributions to United Nations and other multilateral organization programs. Within the IBSA initiative, the DST drives South Africa's science and technology collaborations. The NRF is responsible for implementing the projects and decides on projects in conjunction with Indian and Brazilian institutions.

Disbursement channels

Disbursement, where it does occur, occurs directly through the NRF or CSIR. The DST provides funding for research for development activities in its annual allocations to these bodies, but the DST itself may undertake direct funding of projects, specifically within bilateral government relationships. In most cases, support for research for development falls under existing MOUs and is given to—or undertaken in collaboration with—universities and non-governmental organizations in recipient countries.

³⁰ Further detail on the clusters may be found by downloading the Science and Technology Consolidated Plan of Action at www.nepadst.org/doclibrary/pdfs/doc27_082005.pdf.

³¹ Interview data, July 2007.

6. International Linkages in South African Development Assistance

The advent of international partnerships under the ANC government apparently occurred during the 2000 Mozambique floods, when South Africa was involved in flood-relief activities. South Africa received co-funding from donors to assist in this work. This collaboration was then formalized through an amendment of the act governing the ARF, which permitted the ARF to accept funds from foreign donors.

The Department of Foreign Affairs apparently pioneered the use of trilateral assistance; other departments have slowly taken up this method. By 2007, trilateral partnerships have been struck with the Netherlands, Switzerland, Sweden, Norway, and Belgium. Trilateral partnerships for development assistance are concentrated almost entirely on African recipients. Trilateral partnerships with multilateral agencies and institutions, however, are not common. In fact, South Africa is still exploring the possibility of acting as a provider of development assistance in these situations.

Collaborative interests

With South Africa's development partners slowly reducing their commitments to South Africa as the country makes progress in reducing poverty and balancing its budget, the Department of Foreign Affairs has been trying to maintain levels of support for the region by collaborating on trilateral partnerships rather than see funds completely reduced. For example, the DRC's requests for support are greater than South Africa can handle on its own. Accordingly, South Africa has approached traditional donor partners to partner with South Africa in the DRC.

South Africa would like to play a greater role in the continent, but the country does not want to overreach politically or financially.³² South Africa is also aware that many African countries still do not trust it as a development partner. The June 2007 ANC policy conference highlighted these issues and encouraged the South African business community to operate respectfully and ethically when conducting business in Africa. This concern extends to the proposed formation of a South African international development agency. The conference cautioned that its implementation should not generate negative perceptions about South Africa as a colonial power.

Partnerships with established development partners, however, enable South Africa to defuse concerns about its role as a development partner. This kind of relationship suits both South Africa and its development partners. Many non-African development partners have an interest in working with an African partner on the continent, while South Africa benefits from the expertise these partners have gained in providing development assistance to Africa over many years.

Cooperative methods

There is no uniform policy and process that directs tripartite cooperation. Individual departments establish trilateral partnerships with little overall coordination with the activities of other government departments and agencies. As such, the only verifiable sources of data on trilateral initiatives are from foreign donor partners. Overall evaluation of the impact of development assistance spending is more complex when multiple funders are involved.

To support the formalization of trilateral partnerships, the National Treasury has recently appointed a dedicated trilateral assistance division that would establish the principles, criteria, and guidelines of such cooperation. A draft agreement has been produced and is currently being discussed with a number of development partners. Until this agreement is finalized and implemented, the International Development Cooperation Chief Directorate at National Treasury will be the contact point for such cooperation.

The donor partners acknowledge that South Africa has comparative advantages (location, culture, history, identity, acceptability) in Africa and shares the African Renaissance vision with its African counterparts. However, little practical coordination occurs between South

³² Interview data, July 2007.

African officials and those of donors who are already active in the country concerned. Similarly, South African officials do not play an active role in efforts to enhance the effectiveness of development assistance. This lack of participation may be related to South Africa's reluctance to be perceived as a traditional donor nation.

Trilateral cooperation can be difficult to coordinate. Donor partners also need to refine their existing systems in order to be able to take full advantage of such cooperation—especially when it comes to channelling funds from one Northern donor to another for the same project.

Partnering at local recipient level

In most instances, implementation of development assistance is conducted through partnerships with local institutions and in conjunction with technical government experts from South Africa. South African nongovernmental and private-sector organizations sometimes implement projects. Supplies and staffing are often sourced locally, but South African companies usually supply spares and conduct maintenance of equipment. In nearly all cases, there is little effective development coordination capacity in recipient countries, so development assistance may not necessarily be integrated into national planning at the recipient level.

7. International Linkages in South African Research for Development

Although South Africa's development assistance partnerships are concentrated almost entirely on a small number of African recipient countries, research for development projects are much more diverse geographically. In fact, the European Union (EU) features prominently in international partnerships. This involvement is exemplified by South Africa's contributions to the EU Science and Technology Framework and support of EU framework programs and support actions.

More specifically, South Africa played a primary role in rolling out across Africa the Science and Technology Europe Africa Programme (ST-EAP), which promotes involvement of African research organizations in European research consortia. The CSIR is the lead implementing agency on the South African side, and one of only two African consortium partners—the other being the African Academy of Sciences.

The ST-EAP, which falls under the EU's 6th Framework Programme (FP6), promotes the European Research Area and supports NEPAD's recently adopted Africa's Science and Technology Consolidated Plan of Action. The implementation agenda of the ST-EAP specifically calls for co-funding to be explored, which will likely lead to involvement by other South African government departments and agencies.

The Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) acts as an African Regional Focal Point for the World Association of Industrial and Technological Research Organisations (WAITRO), which promotes interaction among African researchers. CSIR participation in this initiative is funded by the Department of Science and Technology (DST) and the Malaysian government. The CSIR also performs regular contract work in Africa for several foreign donor institutions and development agencies. In some cases, the CSIR acts as the implementing agency for trilateral efforts in Africa in which an African country has approached a donor for assistance. The donor then contracts the CSIR to implement the project.

The National Research Fund (NRF) has established trilateral partnerships with the United Kingdom, France, and Norway. The United Kingdom is working with South Africa to tackle foot and mouth disease in livestock. France is partnering with South Africa and Ethiopia on a laser project. And Norway has signed a bilateral research agreement with South Africa to support higher education and regional universities in other African countries.

The majority of projects appear to be implemented using funds from European partners combined with South African expertise, or co-funded by donors and South Africa and using South African expertise. Partnering generally occurs with university departments and research affiliates. In many Africa-based projects, partnering is restricted to this level due to the absence of a counterpart national science and technology research body or a national structure for research for development.

In most cases, donor partners prefer to keep a low profile and allow South Africa to take the lead in project implementation. This arrangement suits South Africa, as the country is not keen on being seen as an extension of donor nations and foreign agencies.

8. Conclusion

The current nature of South African development assistance suggests that much could be done to improve both the tracking and assessment of such assistance. The situation as it stands now is highly decentralised across government, and can in no way be described as a single national development assistance programme. If this can be monitored, coordinated and channelled, its impact and effectiveness could be vastly improved, and it could play an enormous role in enhancing South Africa's role and profile on the continent.

South Africa's development assistance contributions, as a percentage of GNI, are already on a par with those of some other leading developing nations. It appears certain though, with the recommendations of the ANC Policy Conference, and the support of National Treasury for further formalisation of DA, that South Africa's role as development partner will grow rapidly in the near future in terms of volume, capacity and structures.

The challenge for the country is how to manage the evolution of its development assistance. South Africa must seek to mitigate some of the negative perceptions and concerns about its motives on the continent, while advancing both its more altruistic objectives of peace, stability and development, and its more interest-driven agenda, which includes developing leverage in its political engagements and commercial interests.

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Abbreviations and Acronyms

AISA - Africa Institute of South Africa
ANC – African National Congress
AU - African Union
ARF - African Renaissance Fund
CMA - Common Monetary Area
CSIR - Council for Scientific and Industrial Research
DBSA - Development Bank of Southern Africa
DCIS - Development Co-operation Information System
DFR & IC - Department of Foreign Relations and International Cooperation
DPSA - Department of Public Service and Administration
DRC - Democratic Republic of the Congo
DST - Department of Science and Technology
FAO – Food and Agriculture Association of the United Nations
GDP – Gross domestic product
GNI – Gross national income
HSRC - Human Sciences Research Council
IBSA – India-Brazil-South Africa
IDC - Industrial Development Corporation
IDC CD - International Development Co-operation Chief Directorate
IEC - Independent Electoral Commission
IMF – International Monetary Fund
MOU - Memoranda of understanding
NEPAD - New Partnership for Africa's Development
NRF - National Research Fund
ODA - Official development assistance
OECD – Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OOF - Other official flows
R – Rand
SACU - Southern African Customs Union
SAIDA - South African International Development Agency
SADC – Southern African Development Community
SAMDI – South African Management Development Institute
SANDF – South African National Defence Force
SAPS - South African Police Services
ST-EAP - Science and Technology Europe Africa Programme
UNIDO – United Nations Industrial Development Organization
UNDP – United Nations Development Programme
WAITRO - World Association of Industrial and Technological Research Organisations
WFP - World Food Programme
WHO – World Health Organization