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A ‘post-aid world’? Paradigm shift in foreign aid and development cooperation at the 2011 Busan High Level Forum

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In this paper we suggest that 2011–2012 may mark a paradigm shift in dominant constructions of ‘foreign aid’ and a substantive shift of power within the architecture of global development governance. We evaluate critically the emergence and central principles of the ‘aid effectiveness paradigm’ over the last 10–15 years, and the various internal and external pressures that have mounted around it. We then discuss the Fourth High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness, a global conference which was held in Busan, South Korea in 2011, which we suggest can be seen as a pivot point in the emergence of a new ‘development effectiveness’ paradigm. Among other things, this elevates the role of the private sector and re-centres economic growth and enhanced productivity to the core of mainstream ‘development’ thinking. At the same time, the emerging aid architecture aims to enrol more fully the ‘(re-)emerging’ donors and development partners, and is likely to involve more differentiated commitments to global aid targets and renegotiated ‘norms’. This paper provides a commentary on the debates, omissions and achievements of the Busan High Level Forum, with the wider aim of providing critical insights into the current state of flux around foreign aid norms, institutions and governance.

KEY WORDS: foreign aid, development, aid effectiveness, development effectiveness, global governance, Busan, South–South cooperation

Introduction

In this paper we ask whether 2011–12 marked the end of a paradigm in global aid governance, and a major shift in the dominant construction of ‘foreign aid’. Over the late 1990s and new millennium a remarkable degree of consensus appeared to consolidate around a set of principles and targets that became known as the ‘aid effectiveness paradigm’ or ‘Paris Agenda’. This enrolled and was supported (albeit to different extents) by the bilateral donor countries which make up the Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (the OECD-DAC)¹, the major multilaterals, recipient states, some of the (re-)emerging donors/development partners as recipients themselves², and non-state actors. However, internal tensions and external pressures have mounted, and many development professionals and policymakers are now talking in radical terms of a ‘post-aid world’ and a new era of ‘development

effectiveness’, consigning ‘aid effectiveness’ to the past. Here we provide a critical evaluation of the Fourth High Level Forum (HLF) on Aid Effectiveness which was held in Busan, South Korea over three days in November–December 2011: an event which appears to have marked a pivotal point in global aid governance and the construction of ‘foreign aid’.

The paper starts by outlining the Paris Agenda before turning to the Busan conference. Here we offer a close analysis of the pre-session events and documentation, the conduct and debates at the meeting itself, and the official outcome document (the Busan Partnership Document: BPD). Particular attention is paid to the role and implications of the ‘rising powers’ as development actors; to the growing validation of the private sector as a development driver; and to the changing institutional architecture and global governance regime of aid and development. We should make clear that this is not intended to be a comprehensive assessment, and we could not analyse all of the issues and outcomes of the HLF.

Aid effectiveness and the 'Paris Agenda'

After the dissolution of the USSR in 1991, Western-led foreign aid flows and institutions experienced something of a hiatus, although the outcomes varied considerably by recipient (Easterly 2007). However, by the late 1990s a new 'aid effectiveness agenda' started to emerge. This was driven by reformers and advocates within the aid community (e.g. OECD-DAC 1996; Sachs 2005); by political leaders wishing to project themselves as enlightened and virtuous (Gallagher 2009); and by activists and campaigning organisations, such as Jubilee 2000, often supported by celebrities (Busby 2007; Richey and Ponte 2011). Another driver was the re-articulation of the relationship between development and security, something that was thrust centre stage after the events of 9/11 in Washington and New York (Duffield 2007; Howell and Lind 2009). In theory, foreign aid became increasingly oriented towards achieving poverty reduction and promoting 'good governance', with a strong focus provided by the UN-led Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) (Manning 2008; Hulme and Fukuda-Parr 2009; ECDPM 2011). While in some respects this marked a definite shift from the ways in which foreign aid was conceived and deployed during the Washington Consensus of the 1980s and 1990s, many analysts observe that this 'post-Washington consensus' (PWC) nevertheless represented a continuity of prescriptions and intrusions, articulating and reproducing a second generation of neoliberal governmentalities (Fine and Jomo 2006).

At the core of the new aid paradigm were two elements³: first, recipient countries apparently taking greater ownership and responsibility for their own poverty reduction and development strategies through Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs); and second, a global commitment to tangible target-led development results, notably the MDGs as noted above (Lensink and White 2001). Both are intended to improve aid effectiveness. Donors were asked to align with the goals and agendas of recipient countries, and to work within existing administrative and accounting systems. This responded to longstanding critiques of traditional development relationships: that the donors drove top-down agendas which often did not fit with recipient country conditions; that recipient countries were insufficiently committed to foreign aid agendas; and that donors imposed excessive transaction costs and undermined state capacity by setting up multiple parallel systems to agree, implement and monitor foreign aid funding activities, rather than working through existing recipient country systems.

Harmonisation *between* donors has also been a major reform agenda. A well known example from a 2006 DAC report on the new aid paradigm found that a large share of aid to Tanzania was being channelled through more than 700 projects managed by 56 donor organisations or units. In 2005, the Government of

Tanzania received 541 donor missions, of which only 17% involved more than one donor. The strain on Tanzania's already over-burdened administrative capacity was immense, as each donor activity required specific disbursement accounts and mechanisms, procurement guidelines, reporting structures and so on. By promoting harmonisation, the new paradigm sought to encourage donors to coordinate and cooperate better with each other in order to work more effectively.

The aid effectiveness agenda has been pegged to a series of targets, which White (2001) argues is important for three reasons. First, they are outcome-based measures, with success being judged by achievement of impact rather than the traditional donor concern with monitoring inputs (i.e. the amount spent), or with immediate and short-term effects. Second, these targets have expanded the concept of development in that they do not focus on income poverty alone: the MDGs, for example, include health and wellbeing, gender and so on. Third, they have acted as a means of bringing a spectrum of governments and non-state actors together. Many of the (re)emerging donors and development partners have signed up to the MDGs, including some which are cautious about other forms of cooperation with the international development community, such as China, India and Saudi Arabia.

Over the last few years the aid-effectiveness agenda has been championed by the Working Party on Aid Effectiveness (WP-EFF). This started as a traditional donor-only group in 2003 as a 'classic subsidiary body of the OECD-DAC' (Manning 2008, 7). However, in 2005 it moved to joint partnership with a large number of 'developing' countries – a change that was indicative of the imperative to confront the growing legitimacy crisis of donor-only forums. In 2009 it expanded again to comprise over 80 members, including 24 recipient countries, eight countries that both provided and received aid, 31 donor countries, nine multilaterals, and six civil society organisations (CSOs) and other organisations. However, although described by Manning (2008) as a genuine multilateral enterprise, it is still hosted by the OECD-DAC, which is also a constituent member, something which many commentators suggest hampers a real shift away from Western hegemony over aid governance (Killen and Rogerson 2010; Chandy and Kharas 2011). The WP-EFF was always intended to have a limited lifespan, and it is currently facilitating the establishment of a successor system, the 'Global Development Partnership', which is described in more detail below.

The WP-EFF was organised around a series of High Level Forums (HLFs) – Rome (2003), Paris (2005), Accra (2008) and Busan (2011) – and their associated regional and working party meetings. The aid-effectiveness paradigm was codified in two iconic international agreements negotiated in these forums. The first was the Paris Declaration of 2005, which

promoted ownership, harmonisation, alignment, results-based management and mutual accountability, and which was signed by 35 donor countries, 26 multilateral donors, 56 recipient countries (including some which are also donors/development partners), and 14 civil society observers (OECD-DAC 2005). The Accra Agenda for Action (AAA) followed in 2008, with a focus on improving the predictability of aid flows, a stronger commitment to working through recipient country systems, and on untying aid and reducing prescriptive conditionalities. Progress on these goals was monitored through global surveys, with the baseline survey conducted in 2006. A 2008 interim survey fed initial results back to the Accra Forum, and a 2011 survey informed the Busan HLF (OECD 2006 2008 2011; Chandy and Kharas 2011; Woods *et al.* 2011).

Many welcomed these new development directions, and they appeared to win remarkably wide approval, and indeed, make some gains. The 2008 Accra HLF reported progress with regard to untying aid, coordinating technical cooperation, and improvements in the reliability of recipient governments' financial systems. But the results were more disappointing in terms of making aid flows more predictable and reliable, encouraging donors to align with recipient country systems, and in enhancing mutual accountability (OECD-DAC 2008 2011). Interestingly, it appeared to be the 'traditional' donors rather than the recipients who were lagging furthest from their commitments (ECDPM 2011).

However, some analysts suggest that a more fundamental problem confronting the Paris Agenda was its failure to grapple sufficiently with the political nature of development and foreign aid (e.g. Hyden 2008). The new millennial paradigm was insistently presented as a consensus, not just between donors but also with and among recipients, which were now in theory 'partners' in the development process. But critics argued that political realities were suppressed in this vision of a technical realm in which agents have an agreed set of goals and market-led means to get there, encompassed within the liberal framework of the post-Washington Consensus and expressed in (supposedly) country-led PRSPs (Fine and Jomo 2006; Rogerson 2005; Odén and Wohlgenuth 2011). The *politics* of development – the interests of particular states, sectors and institutions within and between donor and recipient countries; the fundamental disagreements over the nature of 'development' and the 'right' route(s) to achieving it; and inequalities of power and agency – are invariably bubbling away below the surface of these debates, meetings and forums, but are rarely formally acknowledged within official documentation and pronouncements (Dijkstra and Komives 2011).

Adding to the internal pressures confronting the Paris Agenda is an increasingly complex external environment. The effects of the global financial crisis on

development funding and politics remain open, but it appears to have accelerated changes taking place in the nature and balance of global power. Shifts in political leadership in a number of DAC countries and the global financial crisis have stimulated a much stronger discourse of national interest and 'value for money' within foreign aid (Banks *et al.* 2011; Breman 2011; Mawdsley *et al.* 2011; Noxolo 2011). Second, there has been an extraordinary explosion in the number of state and non-state aid actors and programmes (Acharya *et al.* 2006; Kharas 2007; Worthington and Pipa 2011). Especially notable is the rise in the number, visibility and voice of a whole array of (re)emerging donors/development partners, including growing global giants like China, India and Brazil; regional powers like South Africa and Saudi Arabia; rapidly industrialising countries like Thailand and Turkey; and former socialist states, such as Russia, Poland and the Czech Republic.

The tremendous diversity and growing numbers of the (re)emerging donors presents a range of opportunities and challenges for poorer countries and peoples around the world; and for foreign aid and development policies, ideologies and governance (Kim and Lightfoot 2011; Chaturvedi *et al.* 2012; Mawdsley 2012). Many within the 'mainstream' aid community now welcome the specific expertise and additional resources that the (re)emerging development partners potentially provide, but express concerns that the fragile gains made by the (so-called) 'traditional' donor community towards good governance, aid effectiveness and poverty reduction will be undermined by the sheer proliferation of new actors and their different approaches to development (e.g. Manning 2006; Davies 2008; Grimm *et al.* 2009). Other commentators take a more hostile view of what they consider to be the sinister agendas and impacts of 'rogue donors', such as China, Iran, Saudi Arabia and Venezuela (e.g. Naim 2007). For others, however, the fracturing of the Western-dominated aid cartel is viewed in a more positive light – here the (re)emerging donors and development partners are expected to be instrumental in re-balancing global power, offering recipient nations greater choices in their sources of financing and assistance, as well as demonstrating alternative models and approaches to economic growth and development (e.g. Kondoh *et al.* 2010). The era of Western-dominated aid institutions and regimes is far from dead, but it is certainly starting to rupture. Kharas *et al.* express the view of many commentators when they observe that:

While the OECD-DAC remains the core of the global aid system, its monopoly of world ODA [Official Development Assistance] is eroding with the rise of the so-called new development partners . . . Traditional donors that form the OECD-DAC can no longer claim to speak for the world's donor community.

Kharas et al. (2011, 38–9, parentheses added)

Rampa and Bilal (2011) suggest that increasing pressures of commercial and national interest are pointing towards a turn away from ODA and towards a 'development effectiveness paradigm'. There is no exact agreement on what this might mean, but it includes a renewed focus on economic growth, enhancing industrial productivity and wealth creation (rather than poverty reduction *per se*); greater integration between foreign aid and other policy areas, such as trade, investment and migration; and a growing and more visible role for the private sector (see also ECDPM 2011). Schulz (2010) talks about a 'post-aid world', and it is clear that many development agencies and organisations are scrambling to respond to what may well be the next paradigm shift within mainstream development theories and practices. Many of the (re)emerging donors and development partners interweave trade, investment, concessional financing and technical assistance, and this seems to be a model that, while currently criticised, is attractive to many recipients/partners, and one which DAC donors now appear to be evaluating increasingly positively. The key challenge of the next decade may be to harness the developmental benefits of this approach without opening up a race to the bottom by competing national interests, sacrificing wellbeing, environmental sustainability, and social and political justice.

The Busan meeting took place in a world that had changed significantly in the three short years that followed the rather successful Accra HLF of 2008, at which delegates sought to consolidate, deepen and accelerate the principles and practices of aid effectiveness. By 2011, the impacts of the global financial crisis, the problems of the Eurozone, the continuing growth of the rising powers, and the stronger voice of recipient states, all contributed to an atmosphere of transition. We turn now to critically evaluate the events and initial outcomes of Busan. Laura Savage and Sung-Mi Kim were able to attend the conference as critical observers and academic participants, and the following discussion draws on their observations and analysis, as well as secondary material. Unless on the public record or explicitly agreed, respondents have been anonymised.

The Busan Conference

For three days, from 29 November to 1 December 2011, debate on the future of development cooperation was concentrated in one city. By close of registration it was estimated that 3000 delegates were crammed into BEXCO, Busan's conference centre, where the huge banners reminded everyone that the task was to agree on and be part of a 'New Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation'. In more than 90 formal presentations, the headline issues were transparency, results management, accountability, fragile state and sustainability. More dialogue and networking occurred in the corridors,

food courts and nearby hotels. In these spaces, the debate at Busan came back to one question: will China or won't China sign? The political negotiations between 'sherpas' (the nominated representatives of clusters of actors), took place behind closed doors. On the morning of day three it was announced that a successful outcome had been achieved: the principles to guide a Global Development Partnership had been signed.

In the immediate run-up to Busan and during the conference itself, a commonly heard statement was that it marked 'the end of an old era and the start of a new one'. The overarching atmosphere at Busan was one of fundamental change, and many agreed with Tony Blair's assertion that 'this is the first time that we can see the end of aid within a generation'. Brian Atwood, the Chair of the OECD-DAC, put it even more strongly, predicting that 'mercifully, even the word 'aid' will bite the dust'⁴. 'Aid' seemed to have become a pejorative term in public discourse for the first time (Eyben and Savage forthcoming). Busan was repeatedly pitched as representing the end of the aid effectiveness agenda, and a fresh start in the pursuit, more broadly, of 'development effectiveness'.

In formal and informal conversations in Busan, the notion of 'development effectiveness' clearly coalesced around several themes. First, it implies a broader focus on 'development finance' rather than the previously more restrictive definition of ODA as a distinctive flow⁵. Thus, there appears to be a growing openness to the idea of enrolling various forms of official export credits and other forms of state-sponsored financial instruments to provide development investment. Development effectiveness also means recognising a far wider and more diverse set of development actors, that 'we are no longer a world of donors and recipients; we are a world of partners: *that is what Busan is about*' (Atwood). The current focus of 'development' on poverty reduction via promoting good governance and social vitality and wellbeing was increasingly critically interrogated, pointing towards what appears to be a growing re-validation of and focus on economic growth as the fundamental driver of 'development'. Recalling earlier theories of economic modernisation, poverty reduction was framed as achievable by focusing in the first instance on growth – there was a sense that by foregrounding poverty reduction *per se* the mainstream community had taken its eye off the ball.

In heralding the 'new' era, the failures of the 'old' were sometimes highlighted, but more often the previous debates, issues and targets simply fell off the agenda. The first day was supposed to be about the Paris Survey, reviewing progress against targets set in the Paris Declaration for 2010. Only one of those 13 targets had been achieved, and that one, as an OECD delegate remarked, had been met in 2005 when the targets were set. But while there are certainly shortcomings and very substantial failings on its own terms

(as its own monitoring process suggests, and as outlined in the first section of this paper), there was a striking absence of analysis of the Paris targets. At Busan these were re-imagined as 'ideals' rather than targets, and now derided as overly ambitious and never realistic. There was no interrogation as to why targets had not been achieved, no frank discussion of obstacles to change. The Chair of the thematic session on Ownership and Accountability on day one asked that his 14 panellists discuss the important questions: 'Why are we not making more progress? What are the incentives and disincentives? What are the ways to making progress when it comes to real people working in real countries in what are often difficult contexts? What is it that is really the problem here?' The questions went unanswered. The Paris Survey was not discussed, and nor was a rather more positive evaluation of progress since Paris by Bernard Woods, a development consultant (Woods *et al.* 2011). Though in the audience, Woods was not asked to speak on any panel or to present his findings.

Interestingly, the exception to this general trend came from the recipient countries. The 'recipient' voices – the African sherpas in particular – insisted on including a recommitment to Paris and Accra in the BPD. It was the recipients who sought to hold the donors ('traditional' and 'emerging') to account, and who sought to streamline and clarify processes and structures of aid along the lines of an ongoing if reformed Paris Agenda. Whatever the manifold failings of the aid-effectiveness agenda, it was at least centred on time-bound commitments which were subject to a process of monitoring and scrutiny. However, by and large it was the views and interests of other actors at Busan that dominated; notably, the DAC donors and larger rising powers. It now looks likely that the successor arrangements (see below), within a 'development effectiveness' agenda, will not have even the limited degree of targets and accountability set out within the Paris Process.

The role of the major (re)emerging development partners

Whether or not China, India and Brazil would endorse the outcome document was of critical interest for all the Busan participants, while for the traditional DAC donors the inclusion of these particular (re)emerging development partners appeared to be an absolutely central concern, and the cause of considerable anxiety. The 'mainstream' aid community has moved very rapidly from neglect and oversight of the (re)emerging development partners, to 'outreach' efforts initiated around 2005, to the recognition of the necessity and inevitability of more egalitarian and indeed respectful relationships that call for mutual learning (Glennie and Rogerson 2011; Zimmermann and Smith 2011). Whether this represents an attempt at cooperation, coordination or cooption is an issue of

much debate (e.g. Woods 2011). Clearly, building relationships with some of these delegations at Busan, notably China, proved to be exhausting work for OECD officials and sherpas: 'Outreach to the Chinese has been incredibly difficult for all of us. In fact we are still quite pessimistic about the possibility that they are going to agree on the Outcome Document' (OECD delegate, day two, afternoon).

In contrast to persistent efforts by DAC donors to engage with China, China seemed less interested in its diplomatic representation at Busan. During the first two days Chinese speakers were absent despite being scheduled to speak, and the keen interest visibly demonstrated by the sheer number of attendees at plenary sessions and side events on South–South and Triangular/Trilateral Cooperation⁶. It was rumoured that the head of the Chinese delegation to Busan had been appointed unexpectedly to a new post just a few weeks before the HLF. The incident undermined the efficiency of the dialogue channel between the WP-EEF and China, while also giving the impression that internal Chinese politics overrode thoughts given to Busan. The Indian presence was also weak, with no Indian representatives designated as speakers or panellists in official events. Russia was similarly far from being assertive, with its delegate saying that: 'It is too early to suggest future aid architecture for us, too premature as Russia gives mostly multilateral aid . . . We are inexperienced . . . We need successful outcomes to be published and we need good examples by other emerging donors.' As one of the participating African ministers noted on the second day of the Forum, 'China and India like to play behind the scenes and remain low-key. They are invisible but they are there. To finalise the outcome document OECD people are contacting them.' The exception was Brazil. Its delegates were evidently more comfortable asserting a leading role for Brazil, claiming to represent 'genuine South–South cooperation' (day one thematic session 4 on S-S Cooperation, reiterated day two, plenary 2). 'Everyone has something to teach, to share with other countries. Brazil has same problems and same challenges with other developing countries' (Brazilian delegate, day one, session on S-S Cooperation).

At the formal negotiations, behind the scenes, forging the right language that all parties could agree to was an enormously contentious issue resulting in lengthy late-night sessions (Kharas 2011). Some DAC members pressed the reluctant China to endorse the fundamental principles with more clarity, while others were comfortable with a more relaxed place for China within the Global Partnership (Birdsall 2011). Eventually it was just past midnight on the last day of the three-day Forum that China and India were known to have endorsed the final document, allowing the OECD to put a celebratory end to the 'hectic couple of years' (OECD delegate, day three, China-DAC Study Group session) preceding Busan.

The tone of the BPD gives considerable latitude on how South–South cooperation might be located within the global aid and development norms and architecture. It explicitly states that emerging donors refer to the BPD 'on a voluntary basis' (para 2), ensuring 'common goals and differential commitments' (para 36). The North–South parameters were not to be applied to the South–South paradigm on the basis that southern donors remain developing countries themselves (para 14), and that 'they are also low-income developing countries and recipients'. However, the larger southern development partners, most visibly China, were at Busan principally as increasingly substantial and influential providers of development assistance. The concessions offered to southern donors in the outcome document could be seen as signalling the desperation of the mainstream donor community in their efforts to engage with the new development authorities and economic powerhouses.

Transparency and the 'New Deal' for fragile states

The drama and tension at Busan may have focused upon whether or not China and other large (re)emerging donors/development partners would or would not sign the outcome document. Yet while these politics were played out in the sherpa negotiating rooms, discussions on the other business of Busan continued in the meeting halls downstairs. Two apparent 'success stories' emerged: improved commitment to the principle of transparency and to reporting aid data, and a 'New Deal' for fragile states. High-profile announcements were made in recognition of each of these achievements at the Opening Ceremony on day two. Hilary Clinton announced that USAID had signed up to the International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI), while the 'New Deal' for fragile states achieved by the G7+ countries was applauded.

The focus on transparency at Busan was, according to Nancy Birdsall, 'people voting with their feet', and this was the standout issue upon which greater consensus was evident while the 'laborious process of trading off priorities to get to a common outcome document' continued (Birdsall 2011). Transparency was not on the table at Paris, and first became a topic of widespread discussion in 2008 at Accra. It is controversial because, despite being presented by the mainstream as an issue of technical rationality, it is of course highly political. The benefits of greater transparency appear obvious – allowing democratic oversight (within donor and recipient countries) and facilitating better cooperation and coordination between donors/development partners. But transparency can also be viewed as an attempt to impose hegemonic governmentalities on the (re)emerging donors (Puri 2010), requiring as it does some degree of common definition on monitoring, reporting protocols and underlying norms. Nonetheless, the direction of movement appears – for the moment – towards

greater transparency, although in multiple forms and not necessarily on DAC terms. For example, in 1999 only nine non-DAC partners reported to the Financial Tracking Service of the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (Harmer and Cotterrell 2006), whereas by 2010 it had risen to no less than 127 nations (Smith 2011). In 2011, China published a White Paper on Foreign Aid, something Smith (2011, 3) suggests is 'a massive step for the aid transparency agenda and for the management of China's aid'. The DAC is working with the Arab Coordination Group Secretariat to discuss greater transparency, and with Mexico, which recently launched a 'Reporting System for International Development Cooperation' (SIMEXICID). South Africa and India are also enhancing their aid reporting and management.

Three different global initiatives are now in place to support this principle. The first of these is the IATI, which aims to promote common standards for the publication of information on aid, and provide information that is user centric rather than provider focused. This was one of the few concrete commitments obtained at Busan. In this it has been notably successful: signatories reporting aid figures through IATI comprise over 75% of global ODA. The announcement by USAID to sign up to IATI was particularly interesting, signalling perhaps a stronger awareness of the need to comply with 'global' standards if 'non-traditional' actors are also being cajoled into doing so⁷. The second, launched at Busan, is the Open Aid Partnership, a World Bank Institute initiative designed to complement IATI's information database but to focus on accountability to citizens. Through the OAP, information on data is uploaded to a web-based mapping tool that visually displays where financing is being directed and encourages citizens to provide feedback on impact from the local level. Third, the Open Government Partnership was highlighted at Busan, a multilateral initiative to encourage governments to promote transparency, fight corruption and strengthen government. Launched by eight governments in September 2011, it now has 43 new members.

The second major outcome of Busan was the New Deal for fragile states. UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon commended the G7+ on this in his Opening Statement at Busan, and it has been heralded as a 'major triumph' of Busan (ODI 2011). The New Deal is designed to focus on the 1.5 billion people who live in conflict-affected and fragile states, and the 30% of aid spent in these states. Mainstream donor behaviour in these states was considered to be particularly poor, and the lack of trust and leadership a significant obstacle to the transition from fragility to development. The New Deal includes five peace-building and state-building goals: legitimate politics, security, justice, economic foundations, and revenues and services. Ten further areas are identified where international engagement needs to change to focus on engaging

and building mutual trust. Since Busan, the New Deal has been endorsed by over 40 countries and agencies, including the US and UN Development Group. We do not address this specific initiative in more detail, but wait for longer-term analysis of its functioning and impacts.

Civil society: what did they want and what did they achieve?

One indication of the more inclusive processes and forums that opened up under the aid effectiveness agenda was the invitation of CSOs to the 2008 Accra HLF— although these were inevitably dominantly the larger and more powerful organisations of both the North and South. Building on this, many CSOs looked to Busan as a key event at which to enlarge and consolidate their stake in global negotiations on aid and development. About 300 civil society actors were present at Busan, with leadership being provided particularly by Better Aid⁸ and the Open Forum for CSO Development Effectiveness⁹. Anthony Tujan of Better Aid represented civil society as its sherpa during the outcome document negotiations before, during and after Busan, and spoke on stage at the Closing Ceremony. However, not all CSOs felt represented in this arrangement, and there were mutterings of discontent from a number of other NGOs present in the HLF. Fronted by Better Aid, civil society participants put forward four demands, namely: to fully evaluate and deepen the Paris and Accra commitments through reforms based on democratic ownership by recipients; to strengthen development effectiveness by promoting a human rights approach and by focusing on the eradication of the causes of poverty and inequality; to affirm and ensure the participation of the full diversity of CSOs as independent development actors in their own right; and to promote an equitable and just development cooperation architecture. Specific emphases were put on the promotion of gender equality, inclusion of marginalised groups, Decent Work and environmental sustainability (Better Aid 2011).

Advocating these agendas, civil society representatives sought to increase the space of their participation, and claimed to represent the voice of the poorest and voiceless at Busan negotiations. They were given their own sherpa, joining national representatives in the negotiations over the BPD, while also co-organising official Forum events and staging advocacy activities at the conference venue. The BPD was announced to be a 'victory' by civil society representatives. Paragraph 22 specifically addressed their demand for a greater civil society participation in shaping policies and forging partnerships, and confirmed that the role of civil society is independently vital for development. A civil society leader declared that, 'We have truly valued our inclusion as equals at the HLF-4 negotiating table and expect this practice to

be replicated at national levels' (Emele Duituturaga, Open Forum Co-Chair, closing speech).

However, we observed a discrepancy between how many CSOs sought to project 'development effectiveness' as a rights-based agenda with the emerging mainstream formulation described above. Better Aid (2011), for example, argued that a new development cooperation system should be built upon 'a focus on human rights, recognizing the centrality of poverty reduction, gender equality, social justice, decent work and environmental sustainability'. Ssewakiryanga (2011), a Ugandan CSO activist, asserts that: 'For civil society, [development effectiveness] is a concept that goes beyond efficient disbursement procedures (which is what aid effectiveness is) to focus on ensuring that human rights are at the core of the way in which aid is delivered'. But this rights-based interpretation did not reflect the dominant tone of the meeting, or how other actors were construing development effectiveness. Potential tensions were felt between civil society actors and two other groups in particular: the southern donors and the private sector. Chinese delegates openly questioned the universal validity of the claim that democratic ownership, human rights and citizen empowerment are necessary to achieve (economic) development. Civil society participants in turn expressed concerns that much southern (and particularly Chinese) development was elitist and less accountable, and were concerned that this should not dilute democratic principles in the future aid architecture. Ssewakiryanga (2011), for example, goes on to say:

This call for adopting a rights-based approach to aid delivery will certainly be a touchy issue, especially because the new emerging donors have little to show in terms of linking up their rapid economic development with the protection of human rights. Indeed, as we go forward, the place of human rights in the aid discourse remains contested.

We suggest that this rights-based projection of development effectiveness represented a minority view at Busan, and one that is likely to be overwhelmed by a more dominant growth-centred construction of development effectiveness that appears to be emerging among many DAC and non-DAC states alike. Other elements of the civil society delegation were more attuned to these trends. Trade unions, for example, were concerned that economic growth should not be driven by private sector and market rationales in a way that would compromise the Decent Work agenda and social protection (e.g. TUDCN 2011). This leads us to a brief set of observations on the private sector at Busan.

The private sector at Busan

The 'private sector' was perhaps the second most celebrated 'new' partner to the Global Partnership for

Effective Development Cooperation at Busan, after the '(re)emerging' development partners. Although the 'private sector' was not so openly visible or so included as the civil society sector at Busan, their participation helped create the discourse of a 'new global partnership' and their engagement is in part what has prompted observations that we are witnessing a 'new direction', a 'turning point' in development cooperation (Atwood in Barder 2011). 'The private sector', phrased and treated homogeneously, had joined the development partnership. Framed as important 'new' players (although in fact elements of the private sector have long been significant agents, beneficiaries and 'targets' of mainstream development), it was important to 'get them on board'. It was expected that the private sector would bring efficiency and focus in a way that the aid-effectiveness agenda of the past 10 years had not managed to achieve: the private sector would offer solutions where traditional approaches have not been successful.

A wide variety of private sector actors were represented at Busan. The Business Call to Action, the Confederation of Indian Industries, European International Contractors, the International Business Leaders Forum and the International Chamber of Commerce were among those understood to have attended. Also in attendance, we are told, were the CEOs, Chairman or Presidents of AngloGold Ashanti, Coca Cola Africa, Danone, Diageo, Ericsson, Heineken, Kraftfoods, L&T Infrastructure, Motorola, Nestle, Nokia, Procter and Gamble, Serena Hotels, Shell, Unilever and others. Most of the 'big five' accountancy firms were at Busan. Not only, therefore, did the development industry want to welcome the 'private sector' on board, the private sector clearly demonstrated willing too. This was representative of the work in the lead up to HLF4 of a Task Team of Private Sector Development within OECD-DAC, one of many 'coalitions of the willing'¹⁰ to advance dialogue and networks on key issues. This explored the identity and role of the private sector, recognising the diversity of both existing and potential engagement with the various actors under the private sector umbrella, as well as the existence of a body of literature focused on this (e.g. UNGC 2011).

The private sector, though celebrated at Busan, was not well understood. It seemed to many that they kept to themselves, that they followed a series of sessions on private sector development, and that the private sector discussions focused on public-private partnerships rather than the myriad of other ways that the private sector could and does engage in 'development'. The distinctions within the private sector bracket were not dissected (see Nelson 2011), and the potential of the private sector was rarely (if ever) raised as a topic in other sessions on measuring results, supporting national procurement systems, facilitating technological innovation or engaging the (re)emerging donors. The latter is of particular significance, as a representative of the Ministry of Commerce in China

underlined: 0.06% of China's GDP is disbursed as development cooperation (for education, health and sanitation and so on). The vast majority of their development cooperation is provided through their corporations and banks (for infrastructure and construction, though precise figures are often misunderstood and exaggerated). The IATI holds out hopes of incorporating 'all development finance' into their transparent reporting system, but this is yet to be seen (Barder 2011), and is ambitious given the challenges experienced so far in even getting aid figures accurately and consistently on record. Yet, for some, this would have been the achievement of bringing 'the private sector' in at Busan, to achieve 'a framework for effective and responsible private finance' (Ellmers 2011). In this, Busan failed. We are yet to see what the HLF4 Joint Statement on expanding and enhancing public and private cooperation for growth will mean for development norms, flows and institutions.

The BPD and post-Busan process

The BPD serves as the reference for the post-Busan process to devise working frameworks to operationalise a new Global Partnership for Development, which is intended to serve as a neutral and inclusive platform for development cooperation. The WP-EFF was assigned the task of facilitating 'agreement on the working arrangements for the Global Partnership' (para 36) and developing a 'selective and relevant set of indicators and targets' (para 35b). To operationalise the Global Partnership, a taskforce called the Post-Busan Interim Group (PBIG) was established. Led by WP-EFF members, the new machinery also invited new participants, who had not been members of the pre-Busan sherpa group. Having convened in mid-February 2012 for the first time, the PBIG identified four core functions of the Global Partnership: maintain and strengthen political momentum for more effective development cooperation; ensure accountability for implementing Busan commitments; facilitate knowledge exchange and sharing of lessons learnt; and support implementation of Busan commitments at the country level (OECD-DAC WP-EFF 2012a). A 'global light' approach was emphasised in order to avoid bureaucratic multi-layered duplication in institutional arrangements. One likely outcome is that Secretariat services will be provided jointly by the OECD and UNDP to support the functioning of the Partnership.

Creating incentives for South-South cooperation providers to actively participate in the Global Partnership seems to be a daunting challenge. In particular, the issue of a post-Busan monitoring framework seems to be causing discomfort to a number of southern participants. According to the summary of the February meeting of the interim taskforce, Brazil, India and China informed the PBIG that they were attending the meeting as observers (OECD-DAC WP-EFF 2012a). In response, the Chair of the group suggested instead

that they had 'participant observer' status. Additionally, Brazil and Mexico indicated that they are not at this stage in a position to be associated with the future monitoring framework, citing the differential and voluntary nature of their commitment at Busan. Several other participants, however, called for increased information sharing on all forms of development cooperation, and the civil society representative Better Aid argued that there should be clear accountability for the implementation of the entire Busan declaration (Better Aid 2012). The final endorsement of the post-Busan monitoring framework and working arrangements for Global Partnership is due (at the time of writing) to be announced in the June WP-EFF Plenary. Intensive efforts are to be made in the coming few months to come up with a globally agreeable future roadmap for implementation.

Update¹¹

By the final PBIG meeting in May, Brazil and India sat as participant observers but China was not represented in the meeting (OECD-DAC WP-EFF 2012b). Mexico, especially, emphasised the particular status of countries that are both recipients and providers of aid (OECD-DAC WP-EFF 2012b). It was decided that these countries formed a particular constituency and deserved a co-chair in the Steering Committee of the Global Partnership, separate from the other two co-chairs representing pure recipients and pure providers of development cooperation (OECD-DAC WP-EFF 2012c, 5).

The sense of uncertainty around the emerging global aid architecture continues after the June meeting of the PBIG and the Development Cooperation Forum (hosted, with far less fanfare than HLF4, in New York in July 2012). Rumour abounds as to how the BPD will be operationalised. The Global Development Partnership is due to be an independent and 'homeless' political forum, supported by an 18-person steering committee. Andrew Mitchell, UK International Development Secretary, will be one of three Co-Chairs, with representatives of an emerging economy and partner country to be nominated by the end of July 2012. Ten broad indicators have been set based upon the BPD principles, including ownership, transparency and accountability. Yet scepticism remains high as to the degree to which the (re)emerging (and, indeed traditional) donors will adhere to these. Civil society representatives reportedly walked out of the June meeting in protest at the lack of real reform emerging from the process. Still, though change is slow and tentative, the sense that a paradigm shift is occurring remains strong.

Conclusions

This paper sets out a 'rapid response' (in academic terms at least) to the Fourth HLF on Aid Effectiveness

at Busan. One can read into the successive geographical locations of these meetings the shifting geopolitics and paradigms of aid – from the 'mainstream' centres of Rome (2003) and Paris (2005), to perhaps the high point of the aid effectiveness paradigm in Accra (2008), when recipients appeared to have genuinely (if still partially and problematically) asserted a stronger voice. The location of the fourth HLF in Korea might be read as a subtle signal of two shifts. The first is the mainstream focus on building partnerships with the emerging powers as donors and development partners, something that has perhaps superseded mainstream interest in pursuing aid effectiveness. The 'traditional' aid and development community is now highly focused on attempting to redefine their own role within a rapidly changing development landscape, and to coordinate with (or arguably co-opt) these 'new' actors. Korea is positioned interestingly within this more complex and multipolar world – an Asian donor, a rising power, a G20 member, and the most recently joined DAC partner. Korea is different and cooperative, distinctive but arguably compliant with dominant, if changing, agendas and institutions.

The second emblematic shift signalled by the choice of Korea as the location for the Fourth HLF concerns what we have suggested will constitute a paradigm change in aid and development norms. A selective interpretation of Korea's own remarkable economic growth trajectory appears to validate a much stronger focus on economic growth and development investment in enhancing productivity, for example, through greater attention to energy and transport infrastructure rather than poverty reduction *per se*, or a rights-based approach to development; as well as a larger and more visible role for the private sector, and a widening of the concept of 'development financing'. Whether and how this will impact on 'development', however this complex and contested concept is interpreted, for different peoples and countries (and especially for the weakest and most vulnerable), is another question. Risks and opportunities abound in this fast-changing and increasingly complex development landscape, and the next few years and decades will be ones of considerable complexity and change.

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Notes

- 1 The DAC is now made up of 23 bilaterals and the European Union. It is dominated by North American and European states – with the exception of Japan (since 1961) and South Korea (since 2010), it does not include the non-Western members of the 35-country strong OECD.

- 2 There is no satisfactory term to describe the spectrum of countries that are variously referred to as 'non-DAC', 'new' and 'non-traditional' donors and development partners: all have problematic omissions and/or associations. Although somewhat clumsy, we use '(re)emerging' to capture the fact that while some are indeed relatively new to international development roles, many southern, Gulf and post-socialist states have been development actors for decades. As some reject the term 'donor' (given neo-colonial connotations), we refer to them as 'donors and development partners'.
- 3 It should be noted that here we set out a potted history of the aid-effectiveness agenda mediated through the Paris Agenda. It is not intended to be a comprehensive history of development politics and debates over the last 15 years.
- 4 ODI, October 2011, <http://www.odi.org.uk/events/details.asp?id=2710&title=should-lead-aid-effectiveness-debate-future>
- 5 Of course, the DAC has always struggled to enforce its norms around ODA, and different member states have openly refused to untie aid, or have *de facto* ensured considerable domestic returns on their aid budgets.
- 6 For a critical analysis of Trilateral/Triangular Cooperation, see McEwan and Mawdsley (2012).
- 7 One American representative of an international NGO did not believe that USAID would fully sign up to IATI, even the night before the announcement – the US usually endorses the commitment and effort of such initiatives, but does not commit to changing their own behaviour. This was therefore a significant statement of intent. However, we should note that there are a number of significant implementation issues for IATI.
- 8 www.betteraid.org/ (last retrieved 23 July 2012).
- 9 www.cso-effectiveness.org/home,091-.html (last retrieved 23 July 2012).
- 10 Comment to one of the authors by Philippe Besson, Co-Chair of Cluster A on Ownership and Accountability, March 2011 Meeting of Cluster A, Paris, OECD.
- 11 Written 1 August 2012.

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