

README

China's Public Diplomacy Dashboard Dataset (Version 1.0)

December 9, 2019

This dataset is composed of first of its kind quantifiable data on China's public diplomacy efforts from two of AidData's reports *Ties That Bind* and *Influencing the Narrative* that is available through AidData's China's Public Diplomacy Dashboard. This includes metrics for five types of public diplomacy: financial, cultural, elite-to-elite, exchange, and informational. Using the dashboard you can create custom data sets, maps and graphs based on the type of public diplomacy, recipient countries and time periods in which you are specifically interested.

Below are the citations for the reports from which the data in this dataset is drawn:

Custer, S., Russell, B. DiLorenzo, M., Cheng, M., Ghose, S., Sims, J., Turner, J., and H. Desai. (2018). *Ties That Bind: Quantifying China's public diplomacy and its "good neighbor" effect*. Williamsburg, VA: AidData at William & Mary.

Custer, S., Prakash, M., Solis, J., Knight, R., and J. Lin. (2019). *Influencing the Narrative: How the Chinese government mobilizes students and media to burnish its image*. Williamsburg, VA. AidData at William & Mary.

This data file includes two separate datasets: (1) Chinese Public Diplomacy, which provides country-year aggregates for each public diplomacy measure; and (2) China's Financial Diplomacy Project Details. The second dataset provides a detailed look at the Chinese Official Finance flows that are used in the main analysis for financial diplomacy.

The dataset consists of variables collected from an array of sources and methods, including primary data collection carried out by AidData as well as extending existing measures pioneered by previous research.

Citation

AidData. (2019). China's Public Diplomacy Dashboard Dataset, Version 1.0. Retrieved from <http://china-dashboard.aiddata.org>

Data Coverage

Scope: Quantitative measures of China's public diplomacy tools leveraged bilaterally.

Year Coverage: 2000-2016

Geographical Coverage: 25 countries in East Asia and the Pacific: Australia, Brunei, Cambodia, Fiji, Indonesia, Japan, Kiribati, North Korea, South Korea, Laos, Malaysia, Micronesia, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nauru, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Samoa, Singapore, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Tonga, Vanuatu, and Vietnam.

Field Definitions

Chinese Public Diplomacy

| Field Name | Definition |
|---------------------------|---|
| receiving_country | The country that imports or accepts the overtures from China to extend its influence outside its borders. |
| year | The year a public diplomacy tool is deployed to the receiving country from China. |
| confucius_institutes | Cumulative number of Confucius Institutes operating within each receiving country per year. Confucius Institutes (CIs) are non-profit, but government-operated organizations with the mandate to promote Chinese language and culture. CIs are usually set up as a partnership with a local university in the receiving country (or secondary schools in the case of Confucius Classrooms), and have the additional objective to promote local cooperation with Chinese businesses. |
| sister_cities | Cumulative number of Sister/Friendship Cities between cities or provinces in China and a city or province in the receiving country per year. |
| government_visits | Total number of high-level and provincial-level visits by government officials between China and the receiving country each year. Includes visits in the receiving country, in China, or in a third location. |
| military_visits | Total number of high-level and provincial-level visits by military officials between China and the receiving country each year. Includes visits in the receiving country, in China, or in a third location. |
| total_elite_visits | Sum of all military and government visits between China and the receiving country per year. |
| ambassador_op_eds | Number of publications of op-eds written by the highest echelon of Chinese Ambassador in local media by country-year |
| journalist_visits | Number of journalistic exchange visits to China from EAP countries by country-year. |
| media_partnerships | Cumulative number of content sharing agreements/partnerships signed between Chinese state-run media and domestic media outlets up until that year. |
| outbound_chinese_students | Number of Chinese students studying in EAP by country-year |
| inbound_students_to_china | Number of international students studying in China by country-year |

China's Financial Diplomacy Project Details

| Field Name | Definition |
|--------------------------|---|
| project_id | Unique identification number assigned to every project in the dataset. Within the dynamic, online version of the dataset (at china.aiddata.org), projects can be accessed with their unique identification numbers by using the "Access project by ID" function. |
| type | Type of public diplomacy tool – e.g. financial public diplomacy |
| category | Category of public diplomacy within financial diplomacy. The four possible values include budget support, infrastructure investments, debt relief, and humanitarian assistance. |
| visible_sector | Indicates if the project is in a visible sector (only applicable to infrastructure projects). "Yes" indicates it is in a visible sector. |
| recommended_for_research | This field identifies projects that AidData recommends including for normal research & financial analysis. It is equal to "TRUE" for all projects except for those that are marked as umbrella projects, pledges, cancelled, or suspended projects. We recommend excluding the projects marked "FALSE" because the umbrella projects and projects with a status of pledged, cancelled, or suspended likely represent double counting or would lead to including flows that were never fully committed/implemented. This field is meant to make it easier for users to clearly identify the set of projects that we recommend using to better understand the volume and composition of Chinese Official Finance. |
| umbrella | This field identifies projects where some agreement was signed between two countries but the funds were not allocated at the original agreement date, only to be allocated through smaller projects later on. Given the nature of TUFF data collection, it is likely that the smaller projects that relate to these umbrella projects were captured elsewhere in the dataset. To avoid double counting, we suggest users do not include records that are marked as umbrella projects in financial analysis. All general lines of credit are also marked as umbrella projects. |
| year | The year in which an agreement was reportedly made between a supplier of development finance and a recipient for a project. If available, the agreement year is the year of the formal signed commitment for a project; if commitment year is unavailable, or if a commitment has not been made, the year of the informal pledge is the agreement year for a project. |
| donor | Entity providing assistance to recipient country. This can be a sovereign state or multilateral organization providing assistance to a recipient country. For this dataset, the donor will always be China. |
| funding_agency | Donor agency that provided the funding. |
| implementing_agency | Agency that implemented the project. Could be from the donor, recipient or other parties. |
| recipient_condensed | Recipient country. If multiple countries were identified as recipients, this field identifies the smallest regional grouping that all specified countries belong to. |
| title | Short phrase describing the nature of a given project |
| description | 1-2 paragraph comprehensive summary of the activities supported by the project. See page 15 of the methodology for a detailed explanation of how this variable is recorded. |
| status | Tracks the progression of a project. Labels include: Pipeline: Pledge, Pipeline: Commitment, Implementation, Completed, Suspended, Cancelled. |
| flow | Details on how financial flows, goods or services are transferred from the donor to recipient for a project. Flow types include: Debt Forgiveness, Debt Rescheduling, Export Credits, Foreign Direct Investment, Freestanding Technical Assistance, Grant, Loan, Joint Venture with Recipient, Scholarships/Training in Donor Country, and Strategic/Supplier Credit |
| flow_class | Coders are also instructed to assign all projects to one of the following flow class categories: ODA-like, OOF-like, Vague (Official Finance), Official Investment, Official Religious Aid 1, and Official Religious Aid 2. More details on these flow |

categorizations can be found in Tuff Methodology 1.3 document. If the goal is to estimate Chinese Official Development Assistance in the strictest sense, include only projects with this field as ODA-like. However, if the goal is to estimate a more comprehensive measure of concessional and non-concessional Chinese Official Finance, then include ODA-like, OOF-like and Vague (Official Finance).

| | |
|--------------------------|--|
| intent | Perceived intent of the finance provider. Categories covered by “donor intent” include: Development, Commercial, Representational, Mixed (encompassing any combination of the other three intents). |
| amount | Monetary amount pledged or committed by the donor entity for the completion of a project. |
| currency | Currency associated with the monetary amount for a project. |
| usd_defl_2014 | Deflated monetary equivalent of reported monetary amount in reported currency to 2014 U.S. Dollars |
| usd_current | Nominal USD value of the amount specified for the project |
| crs_sector_code | 3-digit sector classification based on OECD sector codes |
| crs_sector_name | Name of the 3-digit sector classification based on OECD sector codes |
| sources | Links to all the sources attached to one project. |
| end_planned | The announced completion date for a project. |
| sources_count | Number of sources attached to one project. |
| cofinancing_agency | Cofinancing agencies or other agencies involved in the project |
| recipient_agencies | Recipient agencies that are involved in the project. |
| recipient_agencies_count | Number of recipient agencies that are involved in the project. |
| deflators_used | Deflator value calculated based on AidData methodology (which mimics OECD deflation methodology) using World Bank sources. Deflator is calculated using donor country inflation and change in buying power. |
| exchange_rates_used | Exchange rate used to change the specified currency of the original amount into USD. |
| start_actual | The actual date that the implementation of a project began on. |
| start_planned | The announced start date for a project. |
| end_actual | The actual date that a project was completed on. |
| year_uncertain | Marker for projects without any sources reporting a specific pledge or commitment year. In these cases, the year of the earliest media report serves is coded as “agreement year.” |
| all_recipients | The recipient entity or entities receiving official finance from a donor entity. A project record can have multiple recipients in cases where a donor entity is providing financing, goods or services to more than one country through a single project. This field provides a pipe-delimited list of all recipients specified as receiving official finance from a donor entity. |
| recipient_count | number of recipient countries identified |
| recipient_cow_code | Code of recipient country according to COW standard |
| recipient_oecd_code | Code of recipient country according to OECD standard |
| recipient_oecd_name | Name of recipient country according to OECD standard |
| recipient_iso3 | Code of recipient country according to ISO3 standard |
| recipient_iso2 | Code of recipient country according to ISO2 standard |
| recipient_un_code | Code of recipient country according to UN standard |
| recipient_imf_code | Code of recipient country according to IMF standard |
| recipient_region | Region of the recipient country. |
| line_of_credit | Denotes a project or financial arrangement where the donor extended a line of credit to a recipient entity. This credit may or may not be used in its entirety by the recipient. |
| is_cofinanced | Denotes projects with multiple countries acting as donor (including the donor of investigation), where the financial amount provided by each donor separately could not distinguished. |
| is_ground_truthing | A binary marker that indicates when a project has been verified with in-country field research. |

| | |
|---------------------|--|
| loan_type | Represents the general nature of the loan. Categories covered include: interest-free; concessional; non-concessional; no information and some information. |
| interest_rate | Reported interest rate of the project loan, in percent |
| maturity | Reported duration of the project loan, in years |
| grace_period | Interval to first repayment of capital in years |
| grant_element | Grant element of the loan, in percent. Uses grant element reported by project sources, unless it can be calculated independently with the OECD grant element calculator (assumes 10 percent rate of discount, 2 payments per annum, and equity principal payment). |
| location_details | The subnational locations where projects occurred. |
| contacts | Name and position of people who were involved in the project if available. |
| is_official_finance | Official finance status |
| year_uncertain | Year status for project |

Files Included

The China's Public Diplomacy Dataset(version 1.0) is made available in a zipped file with the following files:

| File Name | Description |
|--|---|
| ChinesePublicDiplomacy | CSV or Excel spreadsheet containing the country-year public diplomacy measures from China to EAP countries. |
| ChinasFinancialDiplomacyProjectDetails | CSV or Excel spreadsheet containing project-level details for all financial diplomacy flows. |
| README.pdf | The accompanying readme file (or codebook) describing the parameters of the dataset, caveats, and suggested uses. |

Sources and Methodology

Below are the various quantitative measures used in this report and their corresponding sources.

| Public Diplomacy Category | Measures | Sources |
|---------------------------|--|---|
| Cultural Diplomacy | Cumulative number of Confucius Institutes operating each country-year* | 2004-2014 global dataset provided by Xiang and Huang (2015). We extended the dataset for 2015-2016 in EAP using the Hanban website and targeted internet searches. |
| Exchange Diplomacy | Number of established Sister/Friendship Cities for each country-year* | China International Friendship City Association (CIFCA, n.d.) plus supplemental data from targeted internet searches for Japan and Malaysia. |
| | Number of international students studying in China | China Foreign Affairs Yearbooks, 2002-2015. AidData directly collected 2002-2010, and used the data provided by ChinaPower scraped from the same source for 2011-2016 (China Power Team, 2017). Data for 2000-2001 not available. |

| | | |
|--------------------------|--|---|
| | Number of Chinese students studying in EAP by country-year | We queried UNESCO's UIS database for global tertiary student flows for Chinese origin. |
| Financial Diplomacy | Aggregate amount of Chinese government official finance in the form of direct support to national budgets, humanitarian assistance, Infrastructural investments, or debt relief per year.* | Relevant projects from the AidData Global Chinese Official Finance Dataset (version 1.0) between 2000-2014. We replicated the data collection methodology to extend the coverage to 2016 throughout all of the EAP. |
| Elite to elite Diplomacy | Sum of high-level and provincial-level visits by government officials (civilian and military) between the countries each year.* | China Foreign Affairs Yearbooks from 2000-2015. AidData compiled visits of all levels from the chapter of "China's Relations with Diplomatic Countries" from each yearbook. 2016 yearbook was not available at the time of data collection for this project.. |
| Informational Diplomacy | Number of publications of op-eds written by the Chinese Ambassador in local media by country-year | This is an original AidData compiled dataset made by translating information in Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs Yearbooks. |
| | Cumulative number of content sharing agreements/partnerships signed between Chinese state-run media and domestic media outlets up until that year* | This data was originally created by Emily Feng (2018) for her article in the Financial Times. We validated this data and fixed some errors in the mapping of partnerships to countries. |
| | Number of journalistic exchange visits to China from EAP countries by country-year | This is an original AidData compiled dataset made by translating information in Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs Yearbooks and supplementing them with announcements made in the news sections of Chinese embassy websites of EAP countries. |

* These are the proxy variables used for statistical analysis.

Subsetting Official Finance Projects for Financial Diplomacy

The project draws data from Chinese official finance collected using Tracking Under-reported Financial Flow (TUFF) methodology to quantify Chinese financial diplomacy. While official finance covers a wide range of projects, only a subset of those projects qualify as financial diplomacy. Below is a description of how we identified diplomacy projects from our broader dataset on Chinese official flows to include in our measures of financial diplomacy in the EAP region between 2000-2016. All categories include projects classified as Official Development Assistance (ODA), Other Official Flows (OOF), and Vague (Official Finance). We only included projects that have been classified as "Recommended for Research", meaning that the project has at least entered the commitment stage and is not an umbrella project. For more information on these classifications in our dataset, please see our glossary: <http://aiddata.org/pages/tuff-glossary>

- **Humanitarian aid:** Humanitarian aid projects are those that are given as emergency response or recovery flows. All projects with a sector code of 700 (Humanitarian Aid). The sector codes are assigned by AidData researchers at the time of data collection and are reviewed by AidData staff during the quality assurance stage. We use the OECD-Creditor Reporting Service (OECD-CRS) sector coding scheme to assign sectors to each project.

- **Debt relief:** Debt relief includes standard debt forgiveness as well as debt restructuring (e.g. delaying repayment for 10 more years, etc). All projects with a sector code of 600 (Action Relating to Debt) were reviewed and selected to include in this category.
- **Budget support:** Budget support Includes grants given as “gifts” to the receiving country with no stated purpose, grants and loans given to the receiving country with no purpose stated in available sources. We reviewed project descriptions and identified projects that reported China providing money to the receiving government with no earmarked purpose (mostly coming from the 510 sector).
- **Infrastructure:** We defined infrastructure financing with diplomatic intent as activities involving construction of physical, permanent structures. It includes “upgrades” to existing infrastructure, but does not include “maintenance” of existing structures or “rehabilitation” of existing structures. It also excludes rehabilitation of old, historical buildings/structures. We reviewed all project descriptions on relevant to the study period and region to identify relevant projects. Below are illustrative projects included in each sector:
 - 110: Building primary, secondary, vocational, or tertiary school buildings (e.g. classrooms), as well as ancillary structures for vocational or universities (e.g. building a dormitory, gymnasium, pool, library, dining hall, etc).
 - 120: Construction of hospital and permanent health clinics/health centers, (roaming health clinics were not included), and drug detoxification centers. Includes building new wings of a hospital, a new specialized laboratory for the hospital, medical dormitories, and disability centers.
 - 140: Construction of water control/delivery systems, such as the following: aqueducts, water treatment plants, drilling new wells in rural areas, water delivery systems to deliver water directly to houses.
 - 150: Construction of government buildings, such as parliament buildings, executive buildings, buildings to house various government ministry offices, civil servant housing buildings, court buildings, and police headquarters/police stations, etc.
 - 160: Construction of structures with cultural or recreational meaning, such as large convention centers, stadiums, sports facilities. Also includes construction of general housing complexes and “cultural palaces”.
 - 210: Construction of new transportation infrastructure, including all roads (including highways, roll roads, and rural roads), bridges, railways, airports, ports and shipyards. Does not include “rehabilitation” of roads/railways/ports, but does include upgrades or expansion of existing transportation infrastructure.
 - 220: Construction/upgrade of communications infrastructure, such as expanding telecom networks, fiber-optic network linking, broadband networks. Also includes building government information technology buildings and and general development of telecommunications industry (activities unspecified).
 - 230: Construction of new/upgraded energy production structures or distribution networks – e.g. oil refineries, hydropower stations, power plants (steam/coal/thermal), electricity transmission lines, power dispatching centers, etc.
 - 250: Construction of business complexes.
 - 310: Construction of irrigation systems (canals, irrigation dams, reservoirs, water supply networks for agriculture) including integrated water resources development projects focused on agricultural productivity, fisheries infrastructure (fish port complexes, fish storage facilities), and agricultural infrastructure (demonstration farms, agricultural laboratories, agricultural centers), etc.
 - 320: Construction of fertilizer plants, paper mills, glass factories, textile factories, industrial zones, and general construction activities (buildings for unspecified purposes).
 - 410: Construction of a sea wall
 - 430: Construction projects involving structures in multiple sectors

In the statistical models, we also separate the financial diplomacy flows along several other criteria, including the following measures:

- Financial Diplomacy (ODA): Includes all four types of financial public diplomacy (humanitarian aid, debt relief, infrastructure, and budget support) that are ODA flows. (includes committed, implemented, and commitment projects).
- Financial diplomacy (OOF): includes all four types of financial PD (humanitarian aid, debt relief, infrastructure, and budget support) that are OOF flows. (includes committed, implemented, and commitment projects).
- Infrastructure (Visible): Includes all infrastructure funding that went to visible sectors (consisting of 110, 120, 150, 160, 210, 250, and agricultural water/irrigation development from the 310 sector). Includes ODA, OOF, Committed and implemented/completed projects.

- Infrastructure (Not Visible): Includes the remaining infrastructure funding that did not go to sectors specified in the visible variable. Includes ODA, OOF, Committed and implemented/completed projects.
- Financial Diplomacy (Committed): Includes all four types of financial public diplomacy (humanitarian aid, debt relief, infrastructure, and budget support) that have only made it to the commitment stage (so there is no evidence they have been implemented yet).
- Financial Diplomacy (Implemented or Completed): Includes all four types of financial public diplomacy (humanitarian aid, debt relief, infrastructure, and budget support) that have made it past the commitment stage to either be in implementation or to be completed.
- Infrastructure (Government Sector): Includes infrastructure flows that went to the government sector specifically (mostly flows to build government buildings). Includes ODA, OOF, Committed, and implemented/completed projects.

TUFF Methodology Overview

The financial public diplomacy measures are drawn from AidData's Global Chinese Official Finance Dataset (version 1.0) and extended through 2016 for the EAP region. To collect this data, AidData uses the [Tracking Underreported Financial Flows \(TUFF\) methodology](#) to find detailed financial, operational, and locational information about China's overseas investments. The TUFF methodology involves a systematic, transparent, and replicable process of triangulating information from four primary sources: (1) English, Chinese, and local-language news reports; (2) Chinese ministries, embassies, and economic and commercial counselor offices; (3) the aid and debt information management systems of finance and planning ministries in counterpart countries; and (4) case studies and field research undertaken by scholars and NGOs. A dedicated research team synthesizes and standardizes the information from these various sources into discrete project records.

In total, AidData drew upon more than 15,000 distinct information sources to assemble the global dataset. On average, each project record is informed and confirmed by three independent sources. Human data collectors were also assisted by a machine learning algorithm (called the TUFF Robot) to help automate the early stages of the data collection process.

China has formally opted out of international reporting systems like the OECD's Creditor Reporting System and the International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI). Beijing has published aggregated numbers on foreign aid in the State Council

Please see the AidDataTUFF_methodology_1.3.pdf document on AidData's website for a detailed description of the data collection and quality control procedures used to collect data on Chinese Official Finance.

Data Use Recommendations

Note: Financial public diplomacy to North Korea is likely undercounted. There are reports of significant official financing flows to North Korea, but at least some of these flows are kept secret by the Chinese government and the North Korean government. The full global dataset uncovered 20 projects to North Korea totaling \$272.65 million (including pledges), but we have reason to believe that this is a substantial underestimate of total Chinese official financing to North Korea. Based on research, China has given large scale food and fuel aid to North Korea that largely exceeds the captured projects. Given the secrecy of these financial flows (Sutter 2015), it is not possible for TUFF methodology to produce close-to-complete coverage of concessional and non-concessional Chinese government financing to North Korea.

Glossary

Chinese Official Finance: Concessional and non-concessional funding from Chinese government institutions (including central, state or local government institutions) with development, commercial, or representational intent.

Official Development Assistance (ODA): A project that is primarily aimed at development, has a concessionality level (e.g. grant element) of at least 25%, and the recipient is ODA eligible (as defined by the OECD, based on country income level). This definition is aligned with the OECD Development Assistance Committee Directives. For a project to be categorized as ODA in our database, the intent field must be set to "Development", and the flow type field must be a grant, grant-like (e.g. scholarships, technical cooperation), or a concessional loan. In our dataset, these flows are categorized as "ODA-like".

Other Official Flows (OOF): A project that does not meet the criteria for ODA, because it is not primarily focused on development, it is insufficiently concessional (e.g. grant element less than 25%), or is being provided to a country that is not eligible for ODA. This definition is aligned with the OECD Development Assistance Committee 2014-2015 Directives. Projects in this category include those where the intent is primarily commercial or representational, and/or projects that are not concessional enough to qualify as ODA. This category includes export credits. In our dataset, these flows are categorized as "OOF-like".

Vague Official Finance: This flow class captures officially financed projects where there was not enough information about the project's concessionality level or intent to make a clear ODA or OOF determination. The OECD-DAC does not require this type of residual category because its members systematically report the intent and concessionality level of their officially-financed projects.

Public Diplomacy: A collection of instruments used by state and non-state actors from a 'sending' country with at least some intention of influencing the perceptions, preferences, and actions of foreign citizens in a 'receiving' country in favor of the 'sending' country's values, culture, and worldview.

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