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Punctuated Equilibrium in the Regime Complex of International Development Cooperation

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Abstract: In the past, International Development Cooperation (IDC) was an analogue for Official Development Assistance (ODA) in which three central institutions, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank, and the Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (DAC/OECD) regulated the practices of donors and recipients. Recently, a far more complex and diversified scenario characterized by new actors and approaches is replacing this architecture. This paper analyses the transformations in the IDC field, interpreting these processes through an analytical framework of the sources of institutional change. One of its principal contributions is highlighting a pattern of "punctuated equilibrium" through a theory-guided historical analysis, that reflects both periods of stasis and innovation instead of a gradual process of change. We argue that innovation depends on dissatisfaction and shocks, and that the nature of invention depends on a homogeneity of interests among its prominent actors. This paper is based on a research agenda that applies the punctuated equilibrium concept of social theory to the analysis of international regime complexes.

Keywords: International Development Cooperation; Official Development Assistance; Regime Complexes; Institutional Innovation; Punctuated Equilibrium.

Introduction

International Development Cooperation (IDC) encompasses the activities of public and private actors aimed at promoting socio-economic development on the international stage. The concept usually includes terms such as foreign aid, Official Development Assistance (ODA), North-South Cooperation (NSC), and South-South Cooperation (SSC), among others. The most common IDC actions involve donations, subsidized loans, debt forgiveness, and transferring techniques and knowledge.

The IDC field has not constituted itself as an international regime along the lines of other themes such as the international trade regime built around the General Agreement

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on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) and the World Trade Organization (WTO). We can better characterize this field as a "regime complex." A regime complex is a loosely coupled set of specific regimes. It encompasses an array of partially overlapping and non-hierarchical institutions governing a particular issue area (Keohane and Victor 2011; Colgan, Keohane, and Van de Graaf 2012).

Historically, the developed countries have been the main actors in this regime complex. They have been responsible for defining and shaping the rules of this field, besides being the largest providers of resources. The Development Assistance Committee (DAC) established under the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) in 1969 has been the main institutional body of this regime complex in establishing and supervising rules. In addition, the international financial institutions of Bretton Woods – the IMF and the World Bank – have also played an influential role in this field. Over time new actors have gained prominence in this arena such as other international organizations, private entities, non-governmental organizations, and developing countries. Among these actors, we will focus on the developing countries, because they have changed their position from mere recipients to cooperation providers over time.

These countries' IDC activities are usually conceptualized as South-South Cooperation (SSC). However, there is no consensus on the SSC concept. It designates a wide range of phenomena concerning diplomatic relations between countries of the Global South, on both bilateral and multilateral levels. Nevertheless, the term also designates a more specific modality of SSC – South-South Cooperation for Development (SSCD) – referring to actions taken by a Southern country to promote economic development in other countries of the Global South, such as technical assistance, concessional loans, and donations.

The origins of SSC date from a historical context of decolonization and a search by developing countries for a third way in a bipolar world. However, this phenomenon has regained relevance in the 21st century within the context of the economic emergence of developing countries (Cooper and Farooq 2015; Besharati and Esteves 2015; Pino 2014). Among these emerging countries, the so-called BRICS – Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa –, especially China and India, have gained more relevance in the world economy. These emerging powers have invested in consolidating their newly acquired status in the international system to pressure for reforms in global governance mechanisms (Stuenkel 2013; Niu 2013; Meena 2013; Cooper and Farooq 2015; Kahn 2015).

The developing countries have increasingly criticized the legitimacy of the donor-centred structure of the regime. While traditional donors still provide the bulk of development cooperation, the growing activism of emerging providers has put pressure on the IDC landscape (Mawdsley 2012; 2017; Constantine and Shankland 2017; Mawdsley, Savage, and Kim 2014). Furthermore, the establishment of new financial institutions led by China, such as the New Development Bank (NDB), the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), and the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), have brought even more fragmentation to the IDC field.

This paper analyses the evolution of the IDC landscape as it has changed over the past 70 years. We interpret this history by investigating the sources of institutional change and point out the interests of the main actors within this landscape and the strategies they have employed in each historical period. This research engages in theory-guided historical analysis, in which the interpretation of changes in the IDC field dialogues with a more general understanding of how international institutions change in world politics.

Through an analysis of the IDC regime complex, we highlight a pattern of punctuated equilibrium in terms of institutional innovation. This pattern consists of periods of no significant changes and periods of great innovation instead of a continuous, gradual change process. The punctuated equilibrium concept has been applied to several international areas (Krasner 1984; Keohane and Victor 2011; Colgan, Keohane, and Van de Graaf 2012)

We argue that dissatisfaction is a necessary but insufficient condition for institutional transformations. Changes regarding innovation come as a result of dissatisfaction from a coalition of relevant states. Change is also path-dependent and involves incremental changes in existing institutions only when the interests of prominent dissatisfied actors are homogeneous. When those interests are heterogeneous, no proposals for significant changes in existing institutions find sufficient support, and influential states seeking more significant changes have to create new institutions.

The remainder of this paper consists of four sections. The next section presents the debate on changes in regime complexes. The following section provides a summary of the institutional changes in the IDC field over the years. The third section presents a historical analysis, through which we argue that the timing of changes in the IDC regime complex depends on dissatisfaction and shocks. Finally, we feature the conditions under which different types of institutional innovation – path-dependent or new changes – occur in this regime complex.

Changes in International Regime Complexes

According to Keohane and Nye (2011), international regimes are subject to change as new issues arise and configurations of power and interests change. In specific circumstances, nations pursue institutional changes, and sometimes these efforts succeed, generating significant transformations in the institutional structure of the regime in question. The literature on regime changes usually classifies these changes into three types: i) adapting existing organizations to new conditions through internal changes; ii) the incorporation of influential new members into existing organizations with the capacity to shape policy; and iii) the establishment of new organizations (Alter and Meunier 2009; Colgan, Keohane, and Van de Graaf 2012)

One of the primary sources of institutional innovation is the dissatisfaction of relevant actors within the regime. This dissatisfaction typically comes from disapproval of the distribution of material benefits that arise from the regime. Symbolic issues may be relevant as well. Strong dissatisfaction usually increases the demand for policy changes and structural changes within a regime complex. Although institutional reforms are likely to have more enduring consequences than policy changes, multilateral institutions are hard to change. We, therefore, expect that significant institutional change will occur when dissatisfaction with the status quo is acute. The influence of dissatisfaction varies according to the levels of influence of these actors. The regime structure is likely to change only if relevant actors desire a change in the international landscape. The dissatisfaction of weak or small actors will have little impact on the regime. Significant changes in the influence of dissatisfied actors are of importance to our argument. Furthermore, institutional change may also occur through changes in the values and ideas of powerful status quo actors (Colgan, Keohane, and Van de Graaf 2012).

Forming a sufficient coalition to conduct institutional changes or creating new institutions is difficult. Therefore, changes in regime complexes display a pattern of 'punctuated equilibrium' (Krasner 1984). Sporadic events and dissatisfaction among relevant states motivate these changes. For dissatisfaction to translate into institutional changes, powerful actors with common interests must respond to these events in similar ways, forming coalitions capable of converting their preferences into actions. If there is no sufficiently large coalition of dissatisfied states, institutional inertia will prevent significant change (Colgan, Keohane, and Van de Graaf 2012).

In the following sections, we will explore the implications of our theoretical framework by analysing the IDC regime over the past 70 years. We will focus on the formal organizations that make up what is known as the IDC landscape. We will narrow our focus to exclude non-governmental and private-led organizations and international institutions that are sometimes related to IDC activities. For instance, the international trade regime and informal governance networks are not central to the regime complex as we define it here, even though they clearly affect it.

Our method is to trace how the IDC regime complex has emerged and evolved through the creation and evolution of its principal institutions. To that end, we will analyse each historical period of the IDC regime and examine the changes between these periods. We are interested in institutional innovation defined as significant institutional changes. Figure 1 below provides a schematic description of our theoretical framework.

Measuring dissatisfaction is difficult, especially regarding the IDC regime. We assume that discontent can concern the principles and practices of a regime or simply the specific role assigned to specific countries. We are basing our assumptions on primary and secondary data on state actor positions regarding international organizations throughout history for this analysis. We have analysed the specialized literature, public discourses, and official documents regarding state preferences in different periods more qualitatively.

If the influential members of the regime are satisfied with the current structure, we expect that no innovations will happen. When the preferences of some influential dissatisfied members are relatively homogeneous, we expect that institutional change will be path-dependent. New or adapted organizations will reflect previous institutional arrangements, mainly by reducing transaction costs by maintaining organizational routines. Nevertheless, if the preferences of dissatisfied influential states are heterogeneous, we can expect either inertia or innovation which will entail new institutions with new membership arrangements.

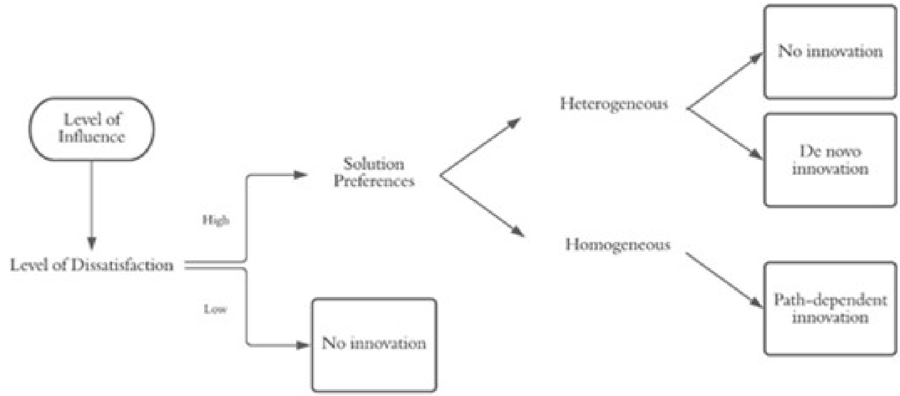

Figure 1. Theoretical framework for institutional changes.

Elaborated by the author, based on Colgan, Keohane and Van de Graaf (2012).

Institutional change in the IDC regime

IDC is not a recent phenomenon in international relations. Although there is no consensus about its definition, the aid literature usually places its origins within the post-World War II context with the creation of the Marshall Plan and the Bretton Woods institutions (Lancaster 2007). A combination of political, economic, social, geostrategic, ideological, moral, and ethical factors has motivated foreign aid over the years. We will separate the evolution of the IDC regime into four phases: the first phase covers the 1940s through the 1960s, the second phase covers the 1970s, the third covers the 1980s and 1990s, and the fourth consists of the 21st century.

1940s – 1960s: The institutionalization of the IDC field

The Marshall Plan was a major development cooperation program devised by post-war American planners to restore the European continent which had been devastated by the conflict. Officially known as the European Recovery Program (ERP), the Marshall Plan spent more than US$ 13 billion[1] between 1948 and 1952 for the European countries that constituted the Organization for European Economic Cooperation (OEEC), founded in 1948 (which gave rise to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) in 1961) (Wood 1986). The Marshall Plan shaped the international context within which the aid regime evolved afterward and created a set of operating principles and procedures that remained an integral part of the aid regime. It was also the precursor to large-scale economic aid programs in the underdeveloped world.

Decolonization processes around the world were an essential factor in establishing IDC on the global level. The first waves of independence created a demand for development assistance from the developing world. In addition to expanding the Cold War's ideological competition, this phenomenon ended up encouraging the supply of foreign aid to newly independent countries.

Throughout the 1950s, the United States began to pressure its allies to create programs to provide foreign aid and share the political and financial costs of IDC. According to Lancaster (2007), pressure from Washington was not the only factor that influenced the establishment of IDC programs by these countries. Most of these countries already had a 'development assistance' history due to their colonialist past. As they recovered and their former colonies gained political independence, these countries sought to maintain their influence in these regions by creating cooperation agencies[2].

These movements culminated in the creation of the Development Assistance Group in 1960 (DAG), which was later renamed the Development Assistance Committee (DAC), under the auspices of the former Organisation of European Economic Cooperation (OEEC), an organization created under the Marshall Plan, a precursor to the OECD. The first concern of the DAG was to establish a single parameter for member countries to report their development aid flows. In March 1961, the DAG published its first report on foreign aid flows that defined many of the guidelines used to date, despite some minor revisions (Fumagalli 1963).

With the creation of the DAC/OECD, the operationalization and measurement of foreign aid flows began to take on clearer outlines. Thus, the DAC has had a significant role in establishing the guidelines of IDC. Through regular meetings, it has produced political statements that have become formal recommendations for its members. This organization has conducted peer review processes to inspect each member's foreign aid policies and monitor members' compliance with its rules. In 1969, the DAC adopted the concept of Official Development Assistance (ODA), separating official aid from other financial flows. In 1972, the DAC established a stricter definition for ODA, which is still valid today. According to this definition, ODA consists of

> flows to developing countries and multilateral institutions provided by official agencies, including state and local governments, or by their executive agencies, each transaction of which meets the following test: a) it is administered with the promotion of the economic development and welfare of developing countries as its main objective; and b) it is concessional in character and contains a grant element of at least 25 per cent (calculated with a 10 percent fixed discount rate) (OECD 1996).

This period also witnessed a growing dissatisfaction among the countries of the Global South. The recipient countries considered this foreign assistance as insufficient and catering mainly to donor interests. Regarding multilateral channels, developing countries resented their inability to influence the norms of these international institutions given their governance structures and the terms of these loans. These dissatisfactions, among other factors, led to South-South Cooperation for Development (SSCD) (Pino 2014; Puente 2010).

Developing countries played no significant role in designing the post-war international architecture established at the Bretton Woods conference. Within the context of decolonization and the intensification of the Cold War, these countries sought to form political coalitions to influence the direction of the International System. We would like to highlight three critical milestones for the creation of a Southern identity that served as a base for the genesis of South-South Cooperation: (i) the Bandung Afro-Asian Conference in 1955, in which twenty-nine nations and thirty national liberation movements met to discuss the possibilities of an unaligned group; (ii) the creation of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) at the Belgrade Conference (1961), which marked a convergence among the countries of the South about the need to defend their autonomy within the context of the Cold War; and (iii) the creation of the First United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) in 1964 and the establishment of the G-77 group in its first meeting, which became the principal platform for developing countries to coordinate their interests in negotiations with developed countries during the ensuing decades (Gray and Gills 2016; Gosovic 2016).

Although the foreign aid provided at first was primarily bilateral, during the 1960s there was a gradual increase in aid provided via multilateral organizations. At first, the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD), the core of the World Bank Group[3], and the United Nations provided almost all multilateral assistance. During that decade industrialized countries established new multilateral institutions to provide loans to underdeveloped countries, such as the Association for International Development (IDA), an arm of the World Bank, and several regional development banks with operating models similar to the World Bank, such as the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) in 1959, the Central American Bank for Economic Integration (CABEI) in 1961, the African Development Bank (AFDB) in 1964, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) in 1966, the East African Development Bank (EADB) in 1967, and the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) in 1970.

Concomitantly with these movements, the countries of the socialist bloc, especially the Soviet Union, sought to establish their own cooperation programs. The USSR assisted developing countries in the communist bloc such as North Vietnam, North Korea, Cuba, and Mongolia in stabilizing and subsidizing their economies. However, developing countries outside the Soviet alliance, such as Egypt, Syria, India, and Afghanistan, also received assistance. In addition, the dispute between China and the USSR for leadership of the communist bloc led the Chinese to assist various countries especially in Africa (Lancaster 2007)[4].

In short, the East-West rivalry within the context of the Cold War, the instrumentalization of foreign aid to meet donor political and economic interests, and the growing hardening of North-South relations characterized this first phase of IDC. Institutionally, the creation and professionalization of agencies specialized in providing foreign aid, the establishment of multilateral institutions to foster development cooperation, and the first movements of political approximation of developing countries marked this epoch.

1970s: International crisis, the expansion of multilateral organizations, and the institutionalization of SSC

The economic turbulence of the 1970s had its effects on the IDC field. The oil crisis in 1973 and the political crises in the Middle East led to instability in the world economy with consequences for both developed and underdeveloped countries. This period saw a significant expansion of international organizations in the IDC field, such as the World Bank, the IMF, the United Nations, and the emergence of new donors outside the scope of DAC/OECD with the institutionalization of South-South Cooperation (SSC) and the expansion of commercial banks as financing options for the developing world.

Due to the increase in oil prices in the international market, the OPEC members accumulated large reserves in dollars. Western commercial banks channelled most of these resources to other developing nations (Wood 1986). However, these countries also lent part of their surplus at concessional interest rates on a bilateral basis[5] and through their own multilateral institutions. These countries established the Arab Fund for Social and Economic Development in 1973, the Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa in 1973, the Islamic Development Bank in 1975, and the OPEC Fund for International Development in 1976.

This context exacerbated both uncertainties and dissatisfactions concerning IDC. On one hand, developing countries, civil society organizations, and specialists, in general, criticized the effectiveness of foreign aid more and more due to the scarce empirical evidence of a relationship between international aid and growth (Milani 2014). On the other hand, Southern countries expressed their indignation with the structure of the global economy more actively and demanded the establishment of a New International Economic Order (NIEO), especially within the G-77 group (Pino 2014).

The growing criticism regarding foreign aid increased concern among the main actors about aid effectiveness. The evidence seemed to demonstrate that foreign aid had thus far had very little impact on the quality of life of the recipient countries. Milani (2014) points out that the 1970s were paradoxical in terms of the evolution of the IDC field. While criticism and distrust of the principles and mechanisms of ODA gained strength[6], this regime went through a process of great institutionalization.

A milestone for the further institutionalization of IDC was creating objective methodologies for assessing the impact and effectiveness of the provided aid. Among these attempts, we would like to highlight the establishment of a logical framework analysis by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). This methodology relied on an input/output model that sought to establish links between causes and effects concerning the providing of external aid. This aid management tool was subsequently adopted by other DAC donors and on the multilateral level by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP). At the end of the decade, this evaluation instrument was adopted by the great majority of donors, both to approve cooperation projects and to evaluate their results (Silva et al. 2016).

Moreover, there was a growing perception in developing countries that the principles established within the DAC/OECD only crystallized the structural inequalities of the International System. They saw the IDC relationships as a way of transforming economic asymmetries into a political hierarchy. This hierarchy was embedded in most international organizations, such as the DAC/OECD and the Bretton Woods institutions. Created as clubs, their governance structures and decision-making mechanisms reproduced the divisions between the North and South, with significant control wielded by the developed countries (Esteves and Assunção 2014).

During the 1970s, the developing countries took the first steps to institutionalize SSC. In 1974, the United Nations established a Special Unit for Technical Cooperation between Developing Countries (TCDC), linked to the United Nations Development Program (UNDP). Since then, this unit has become one of the central forums of SSC at the UN for promoting and coordinating this cooperation (Pino 2014). In 1978, 138 countries held a conference in Buenos Aires, establishing the conceptual and operational framework of the TCDC through the Buenos Aires Action Plan (PABA).

Despite this initial impetus and the momentary optimism of its formulators, the progress during the following years was modest at best. One of the main reasons for this was the limited material capacity of the Southern countries. Fewer than ten countries could play a substantial role in the provisions and institutionalization of the TCDC at that time including China, India, and Brazil. All of these countries faced serious internal socioeconomic problems. Although TCDC does not necessarily imply a significant expenditure of resources, new expenses generated great pressure on their budgets (Puente 2010).

The 1970s brought enormous difficulties to the international economy, especially the oil crisis and world inflation. Even though developing countries, especially middle-income nations, continued their financing via commercial banks to keep their national development plans in place, this formula seemed to peter out by the end of the decade, especially after the second oil crisis in 1979.

1980s–1990s: The debt crisis, structural adjustments, and SSC demobilization

The 1980s and 1990s brought considerable changes to the IDC regime. The economic recession in the donor countries, the increase in US interest rates, the debt crisis in the developing world, and the end of the Cold War led to radical changes in the doctrine of development and foreign aid. Two main characteristics marked this period: the emergence of liberalism as the hegemonic economic orientation and a change of focus regarding the objectives and practices of foreign aid. Aid was reduced and now focused on so-called ‘structural adjustments.’ International financial institutions such as the World Bank and the IMF increasingly demanded ‘conditionalities’ for borrowing. The primary objective was to safeguard the stability of the International Financial System, allowing debtor countries to at least partially honour the service of their public and private debts.

The global savings surpluses in the 1970s had stimulated commercial loans to the developing countries and their consequent indebtedness. At the turn of the decade, the economic recession in developed countries had increased costs for new loans. Some analysts linked to the Dependency Theory school argued that asymmetrical conditions in the structure of the international economy were mainly responsible for the difficult economic situation of the developing world. However, a consensus soon emerged in developed countries that the culprits for this situation were the developmental policies adopted by developing countries in previous years (Please 1984). Achieving external and internal macroeconomic stability had now became the central objective for restoring economic growth (Thorbecke 2007; Wood, 1986).

This international political economy scenario was complemented by the rise of right-wing governments in industrialized capitalist countries, especially Ronald Reagan in the United States and Margaret Thatcher in the United Kingdom. These governments sought to implement economic policies aimed at reducing state intervention in certain activities of the economy. This pro-market rhetoric generated strong support for replacing foreign aid with private capital (Rapley 2007). Thus, in the early 1980s, the Reagan administration created a fertile environment for conservative critics of foreign aid who felt that economic assistance distorted the free functioning of the market and impeded the development of the private sector (Browne 1997).

The relationship between the debt crisis of the 1980s, inaugurated with the Mexican debt moratorium in 1982, and the IDC regime is complex. Wood (1986) argues that many analysts treated the debt crisis as an issue exclusively related to loans made by commercial banks outside the IDC regime. However, the regime's institutions had a causal effect on this crisis. First, the IDC regime alone generated debt, because much of its assistance consisted of loans that led to indebted recipient countries over the years. Although the terms of much of that debt were highly favourable by market standards, official debt in the early 1980s became a considerable burden in many developing countries. Besides, many countries had gone into debt via commercial banks to escape the conditions imposed under the IDC regime. Southern countries saw commercial loans as more depoliticized where they were able to obtain greater autonomy in managing the obtained resources and in executing their economic policies, especially those focusing on import substitution and a more significant role of the state in the productive sectors of the economy (Wood 1986).

The economic crisis of the developing world in the early 1980s reflected and accentuated the IDC regime crisis. The rescheduling of official debts at the Paris Club to safeguard the privileged status of Multilateral Development Banks (MDBs) and private commercial banks no longer seemed to work in 1982. The demands arising from the debt crisis represented one of a series of shocks that affected developing countries. These countries' financial problems were of such magnitude that the aid regime seemed irrelevant to the development of highly indebted countries (Wood 1986). The costs of servicing developing country debt obligations had become so substantial that they tended to decrease concessional fund inflows, leading to a net reverse flow of resources to the developed world during the decade (Browne 1997; Rapley 2007).

This phase saw a greater consensus among donors concerning IDC management. Donors were more determined to define the parameters and conditions for providing foreign aid, with a change of focus towards macroeconomic governance issues (Hjertholm 2000). This reversal placed international financial institutions such as the World Bank and the IMF in a position of unprecedented global prominence as promotors of what became known as the 'Washington Consensus' (Williamson 2009). These institutions were able to define the economic policies of the borrowing countries, and thus were responsible for the future of entire societies around the globe (Browne 1997).

The IDC system had also gradually evolved from interstate cooperation to include actors besides nations, such as international organizations, NGOs, and the private sector (Milani 2014). These transformations provided the backdrop for the formulation of the Millennium Goals (MDGs), a set of goals accompanied by indicators for monitoring and evaluation. These objectives came from a series of goals and proposals highlighted by various international organizations and conferences during this period.

Regarding SSC, the 1980s and 1990s constituted a period of demobilization and regression. We interpret this reversal as a result of the transition from a world based on Cold War logic, the decisive role of the state in the economy, and import substitution policies in developing countries to a world characterized by a unipolar world dominated by the United States and economic globalization. The rise of the economic model that became known as the 'Washington consensus', with a focus on private investments which ended up leading developing countries to compete for this capital, hindering their joint mobilization in international spheres (Pino 2014).

Over the years, the political dimension of SSC lost strength in favour of its more economic and technical components. The ideological character which made SSC a symbol of solidarity among developing countries lost importance due to pragmatic motivations of an economic nature. However, even though the conditions were not ripe for the materialization of SSC at the time, institutional advances, the accumulation of knowledge and successful experiences, and the economic growth of several countries provided the base for the reinvigoration of SSC in the following century.

21st century: new agendas, the re-emergence of SSC, and the fragmentation of the IDC field

The beginning of the 21st century witnessed events and trends that significantly marked the IDC regime, particularly the terrorist attack on American soil on September 11, 2001. Among the consequences of the attack was a securitization of the international agenda. The fight against terrorism gained a prominent role in the formulation and implementation of IDC, especially by DAC/OECD donors. According to Lancaster (2007), the 9/11 attack played an important role in predisposing political elites and public opinion in the United States and European countries to increase foreign aid to combat terrorism.

Consequently, this decade saw an increase in the flow of foreign aid compared to the previous decade. In parallel with the securitization of the agenda, aid effectiveness became a central issue on the development agenda. In particular, the set of principles established during the Second High-Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness in Paris in 2005 helped to establish this agenda. Afterward, several DAC/OECD conferences emphasized this theme during the rest of the decade.

The so-called commodity boom in the first decade of the 21st century enabled many developing countries to achieve high growth rates. This bonanza associated with the growth of the Chinese economy and discontent with the consequences of the liberal policies adopted in the 1980s and 1990s due to the 'Washington Consensus' created the backdrop for the re-emergence of South-South Development Cooperation. Furthermore, the 2008 financial crisis brought significant changes to international economic debates. This new reconfiguration of forces gave greater legitimacy to these countries to adopt a more active position within the IDC regime.

SSC gained new momentum as several emerging countries intensified their IDC activities within this new context. Among these emerging countries, the BRICS intensified their activities in various spheres of global governance. In this sense, their volume of IDC and the number of beneficiaries increased significantly during the decade (Apolinário Júnior 2016; Besharati and Esteves 2015; Gu et al. 2016; Rinaldi and Apolinário Júnior 2020).

However, current SSC differs in some aspects from its first manifestations in the 1970s. These differences lie notably in the rhetoric of SSC and its ideological character. Contemporary ideas about SSC do not have the radical tone of the original formulation. They reside in a new context of relations between the North and the South and between nations and markets. In this sense, SSC activities seek to expand the potential for global integration of markets, especially the commodity-producing areas of the South (Morvaridi and Hughes 2018).

On the multilateral level, the UN has played a leading role in the resurgence of SSC. The legitimacy of this organization to deal with the development theme, given its representative character and decentralized structure, has proven to be decisive for the choice of this institution by developing countries to centralize discussions about this topic. Accordingly, they successfully lobbied to establish a Development Cooperation Fund (DCF), created in 2005 under the auspices of the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). The DCF has led the way in coordinating debates around SSC and the effectiveness of international aid, competing with the DAC/OECD initiatives. DCF positions have become references for understanding the views of developing countries on the differences and peculiarities of SSC (Pino 2014).

Within the OECD, traditional donors began recognizing SSC as an instrument for development, especially during High-Level Forums on Aid Effectiveness in Rome in 2003, in Paris in 2005, in Accra in 2008, and Buzan in 2011. Since 2003, within the scope of the DAC/OECD, traditional donors, through the Working Party on Aid Effectiveness (WP-EFF), have sought to integrate several Southern countries in addition to multilateral organizations, private institutions, and civil society organizations into the aid effectiveness paradigm (Pino 2014). This institution has managed the Paris process to improve aid effectiveness, facilitating dialogue, monitoring performance, and organizing a sequence of High-Level Forums on aid effectiveness. However, developing countries consider the DCF a more representative space than the WP-EFF, because many of these countries, especially the BRICS, see the Paris process as representative of the traditional donor agenda (Killen and Rogerson 2010).

The conditionalities embedded in development assistance have become the main object of criticism for those who challenge this model. Conditionalities have historically been seen as interference in internal affairs and as a way of promoting donor interests (Esteves and Assunção 2014). Since its origin, the relationship between donors and recipients has structured the IDC field. The so-called 'emerging donors' of the global South have begun to challenge this logic. These providers of the South reject the donor, aid, and assistance terminologies used by the DAC/OECD countries. Instead, these countries have adopted the UNCTAD definitions of cooperation[7] (Milani and Carvalho 2013).

Despite their official discourse, these emerging country cooperation practices involve a series of dilemmas that unfold nationally and internationally. Domestically, these providers need to obtain political support for their international actions. Nevertheless, most of these countries still have high levels of poverty, stimulating a debate on whether these resources should be used domestically instead (Hardt, Mouron, and Apolinário Júnior 2020). Also, emerging donors need to agree on shared principles and goals to establish their positions within the IDC field, which seems to be an even more complex dimension. They need to not only differentiate themselves from DAC donors but also negotiate and coordinate their practices jointly. In this respect, cleavages have arisen in the global South, because countries such as South Korea and Mexico, for example, are formal members of the OECD and dialogue with the DAC, while Brazil, India, and China are not part of this organization (Esteves and Assunção 2014).

With DAC countries increasingly concerned about bringing SSC to the core of existing IDC principles and institutions, they assembled a special task force to convince influential players such as China, India, and Brazil to sign the final declaration in Busan in 2011. The Busan Partnership Document marked a turning point in conferring legitimacy to SSC as a legitimate modality of IDC. The Busan agreement is a turning point within the regime, thanks to its unique character in challenging dominant positions and divisions within the field by recognizing various practices as legitimate (Renzio and Seifert 2014). Although it is premature to argue that it has brought a new paradigm to the IDC field, there has been a clear political shift from aid effectiveness to development effectiveness, which is a change advocated particularly by these new actors (Kim and Lee 2013; Mawdsley, Savage, and Kim 2014).

Among the issues agreed to in Busan, we highlight the recognition that the IDC regime architecture has evolved over the years from the old North-South paradigm, and the relevance of SSC providers. Although ODA remains the main form of development cooperation, it emphasizes that SSC represents an additional source of resources for the field. It recognizes that the current development agenda is more inclusive in which new actors participate with common interests but with differentiated commitments.

Furthermore, it recognizes that the nature, modalities, and responsibilities that apply to SSC differ from ODA and that the agreed principles, commitments, and actions serve only as a reference that South-South partners can voluntarily adopt. Finally, the document highlights the potential of triangular cooperation[8], especially of a North-South-South nature, for the IDC regime (Mawdsley, Savage, and Kim 2014; Mawdsley 2017).

However, the unity of these positions has ended up being hindered by the so-called 'differentiated commitments.' China and Brazil, in particular, made it clear that they would not sign the declaration without explicit language that recognized the voluntary nature of Southern partners' compliance with specific commitments, actions, and goals. In addition, this contradiction became evident following the Busan meeting with the creation of the Global Partnership for Cooperation for Effective Development (GPEDC) (Renzio and Seifert 2014).

The establishment of the GPEDC was a significant result of the Fourth High-Level Forum (HLF4), since it replaced the WP-EFF with the mission of increasing aid effectiveness and improving development cooperation more broadly defined. This new institution had a more significant number of members than the WP-EFF, and its secretariat would include both the DAC/OECD and the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) (Gore 2013).

The GPEDC is the result of previous agreements and declarations led by the DAC, including the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness (2005) and the Accra Agenda for Action (2008). This declaration, among other objectives, sought to incorporate developing country perspectives of the IDC regime. However, this origin contributed to GPEDC's difficulties in consolidating itself as a truly global partnership. While the participation of developing countries has grown, several emerging powers, including the BRICS, have signalled that they identify the GPEDC with the interests of the North and a continuation of the Paris agenda. This perception has persisted despite Busan's commitment to broadening its base and recognizing the importance of SSC (Constantine and Shankland 2017).

The mistrust and frustration of the rising powers with institutions and processes dominated by the North contributed to their establishing their own multilateral institutions and processes. These range from collaborative processes, such as the India-Brazil-South Africa Intergovernmental Forum (IBSA) established in 2003 and the latest Southern Think-Tanks (NeST) academic network, to major institutions such as the BRICS New Development Bank (NDB) and the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), led by China (Constantine and Shankland 2017; Oliveira, Onuki, and Oliveira 2006; Becard, Barros-Platiau, and Oliveira 2015; Panova 2015; Cooper and Farooq 2015).

In 2014, several groupings of developing countries agreed to set up a series of new multilateral development finance institutions. These include the BRICS-sponsored New Development Bank (NDB), the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), and the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). The absence of reforms in the Bretton Woods financial institutions, the perceived need for more investments in infrastructure, and the search for more influence in this global governance arena led to the creation of these institutions (Wang 2019).

Therefore, instead of establishing a common understanding of definitions, objectives, and procedures in promoting IDC, the Busan Forum inaugurated a period of intense contestation (Kindornay and Samy 2013). The concept of development effectiveness, for example, potentially the most crucial product of Busan, ended up generating numerous discussions and controversies. While for traditional donors, the concept emphasizes both development outcomes and continued aid effectiveness, for emerging partners, development effectiveness means expanding the field's boundaries, weakening the role of traditional donors, and opening up a renewed space for SSC practices (Esteves and Assunção 2014).

The shift in focus to emerging countries and their call for 'common principles but differentiated responsibilities' reinforces the North-South divides on the international level. Furthermore, the form of institutional arrangements remains a contentious issue. While OECD and traditional donors support the GPEDC as a 'coalition of will' focused on mutual learning and improving development cooperation practices, some emerging partners characterize it as 'old wine in new bottles', which still keeps the donor-recipient dyad at the system's centre (Esteves and Assunção 2014).

The Busan process marked the current fragmentation of international development, with multiple practices being recognized as legitimate. While traditional donors are trying to maintain the DAC/OECD as the central institutional body of the regime, many SSC providers defend the DCF/ECOSOC as the legitimate arena for aligning, coordinating, and setting standards in the field. Thus, the GPEDC and DCF have become two places of institutional disputes between these countries, in which donors and partners struggle to draw new frontiers in the IDC field (Esteves and Assunção 2014).

The next step after Busan in building the new IDC architecture is the negotiation of the framework to succeed the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), in the post-2008 financial crisis context. Traditional donors have pressured richer developing countries to share a more considerable burden in financing development cooperation in poorer countries (Greenhill and Prizzon 2012). However, the most influential developing countries do not want to be bound to a rigid structure of sharing responsibilities. They have maintained a cautious position in the face of a possible 'hegemonic incorporation' into the traditional IDC regime (Vestergaard and Wade 2013). Hence, they constantly reaffirm that SSC is complementary and not a substitute for North-South cooperation (Gore 2013).

In the past, IDC was synonymous with ODA, and three leading institutions, the IMF, the World Bank, and the DAC/OCED, regulated the practices of donors and recipients. This architecture has been replaced by a more complex and diversified scenario, characterized by new actors and approaches. Thus, a new IDC architecture is being formed, but its future shape is still uncertain. Table 1 displays the main developments in the history of the IDC regime.

Table 1. Schematic Overview of Main Developments in the History of the IDC Regime

	Dominant or rising institutions	**Donor ideology**	**Donor focus**	**Main State actors**
1940s – 1960s	Marshall Plan, UN System, Bilateral Cooperation Agencies	Planning, Support for the state in productive sectors	Reconstruction, productive sectors and infrastructure.	United States and other DAC countries
1970s	Expansion of Multilateral Organizations (World Bank, IMF and Regional Development Banks)	Continued support for the state activities in productive activities and meeting basic needs	Support for state activities against poverty, taken as agriculture and basic needs	DAC countries and emerging non-DAC donors (especially Arab countries)
1980s – 1990s	Prominence of Multilateral Organizations (IMF and World Bank) and NGOs	Market-based adjustments	Macroeconomic reform, poverty and governance	DAC countries
21st Century	International Organisations (OECD, UN System, New Development Organisations)	Support to institutions and infrastructure	Poverty, governance and sustainable development	DAC countries, BRICS and other non-DAC donors

Source: Elaborated by the Author based on Hjertholm and White (2000) and Thorbecke (2007).

State preferences and institutional innovation in the IDC regime

Our interpretation of institutional change focuses on the level of influence of the central dissatisfied states within this regime. In this analysis, dissatisfaction among at least a subset of relevant states is necessary for institutional change. We expect innovation only when dissatisfaction is intense, and more importantly, when dissatisfied actors significantly influence the regime. These periods of relative stasis in the regime complex are a part of the pattern of punctuated equilibrium. We can see relevant dissatisfied states trying to create or reform institutions within the regime complex during periods of dissatisfaction triggered by external shocks and endogenous factors.

The notion of punctuated equilibrium is based on the conception of path dependence in institutional change. Path dependence implies that previous organizational and political structures constrain institutional changes. We argue that when members of existing institutions with homogeneous preferences press for change, the result is likely to be path-dependent. This condition is met for multilateral IDC cooperation among traditional donors throughout this analysis. The DAC institutional trajectory over the past few decades has been mainly influenced by the choices of the agency's architects back in 1961. All the essential changes in the DAC, such as the methodologies regarding ODA and the growing attention to aid effectiveness, have occurred without significant changes in the organization's structure. In addition, all relevant changes in the Bretton Woods financial institutions regarding their practices and policies, especially the World Bank's expansion into several organizations over the years, the establishment of Special Drawing Rights (SDRs) at the IMF in 1969, and the conditionalities adopted during the 1980s and 1990s, have occurred without significant changes in their governance structures.

While in the 1970s, all of the biggest donors were members of the OECD, in recent years, China and India, among other SSC providers, have changed the IDC landscape, increasing their importance in this field. Indeed, several Western policymakers have sought to bring China and India – as well as other SSC providers – into the DAC configuration, but without much success. The current membership of the DAC, and its continued institutional links to the OECD, offers significant evidence of the path-dependent nature of its creation and evolution. The same logic applies to the Bretton Woods institutions' governance. Although several countries, mainly China, have become significant creditors in the current world economy and have tried to expand their influence in these institutions, the United States' hegemony persists today (Güven 2017).

In contrast to this path-dependent pattern of institutional development, the regime complex changes in quite a different way when the preferences and beliefs of influential actors are heterogeneous. We can point to three critical examples of this type of development: the institutionalization of SSC in the '70s; the establishment of IDC institutions by OPEC countries; and the re-emergence of SSC in the 21st century with the creation of new institutions such as the DCF, NDB, and AIIB, among others. These institutional changes are all evidence of new innovation, departing from the existing institutions within the IDC regime complex.

Developing countries pushed for the establishment of the SSC agenda and the call for a New Economic Order with the creation of UNCTAD in 1964 and the institutionalization of SSC in the 1970s. The traditional Northern donors saw these movements as opposed to their interests and counterproductive in terms of development efforts. Although the Southern nations did not represent a significant share of the world economy, coalitions such as the G-77 and the Non-Alignment Movement (NAM) expanded their influence in the international sphere, managing to create new institutions within this regime complex.

OPEC countries established their own multilateral development organizations to channel the surplus resulting from the oil crisis to other developing countries. Here we have a clear example of outside dissatisfied nations promoting changes in the IDC landscape through the creation of new institutions which reflected the interests of newly influential dissatisfied states.

SSC's re-emergence in the 21st century occurred despite scepticism and concerns from DAC donors. These nations tried to get Southern cooperation providers to adopt the DAC/OECD guidelines (Kindornay and Samy 2013; Mawdsley, Savage, and Kim 2014). The mistrust of the Southern countries with the traditional organizations contributed to their setting up their own multilateral institutions and processes. These included the establishment of the DCF/ECOSOC and collaboration processes, such as the IBSA intergovernmental forum and the NeST academic network and major institutions such as the NDB and the AIIB[9]. The creation of these new institutions owes much to heterogeneous preferences and beliefs, especially concerning the importance of infrastructure financing and the political conditionalities attached to traditional development cooperation. Table 2 below displays the application of our theoretical framework.

Table 2. Punctuated Equilibrium in the Regime Complex of International Development Cooperation

	Path-dependent innovation	Creation of new institutions
1940s-1960s	Establishment of Bilateral Cooperation Agencies and the DAC/OECD	Establishment of Cooperation programs by the USSR, the establishment of NAM, UNCTAD, and the G-77 by developing countries
1970s	Institutionalization of the ODA, World Bank expansion	Institutionalization of SSC, creation of IDC institutions by OPEC countries
1980s-1990s	IMF and World Bank reforms regarding their lending programs	-
21st Century	Aid effectiveness agenda of the OECD	Re-emergence of SSC, establishment of Chinese-sponsored development institutions

Source: Elaborated by the Author.

Conclusions

It is unlikely that a coherent and integrated IDC regime will emerge over the next few decades, since institutional inertia is strong and the preferences of significant nations diverge, especially now with China's ascension. In addition, increasing disputes over trade and new technological fields, such as 5G communication systems, exacerbates the rivalry between the United States and China in terms of development financing (Kaska, Beckvard, and Minárik 2019; Brake 2018)China, and 5G wireless technologies. The paper explores economic competitiveness through 5G technology itself, intellectual property rights, influence within standards setting organizations, spectrum policy, deployment timelines, and surrounding innovation ecosystem. It also proposes institutional arrangements for evaluating security risks of Chinese telecommunications equipment entering the U.S. market. Next generation connectivity, 5th Generation (5G.

We are interested in the organizational politics of IDC and the broader issues of institutional innovation. This paper contributes to the debate regarding how international regime complexes emerge and change throughout a theoretically guided interpretation of institutional change in the IDC landscape since the 1950s by mobilizing the punctuated equilibrium concept. We argue that the demand for institutional change depends on dissatisfaction. A high level of dissatisfaction on the part of one or more nations is a necessary but insufficient reason for institutional innovation. Our work suggests that the character and degree of institutional change in IDC politics depend on the homogeneity of preferences among the key regime players. When there has been homogeneity in the interests of significant actors, the result has been path-dependent institutional change. When there have been heterogeneous interests, dissatisfied nations have established new institutions, because the existing rules allow their opponents to block significant changes in existing institutions.

The inherent difficulties of international institutional innovation ensure that path-dependence is the norm. State preferences, based on specific interests rooted in international positions, domestic politics, and history, remain strong determinants of institutional change. An interesting area of research would be comparing the patterns of change in different regime complexes, depending on how well-integrated they are. In a loosely structured or fragmented regime complex, one set of institutional changes could occur without disrupting other institutions in the regime area, which appears to be the case in the IDC field. However, in a more rigid regime complex, it may be challenging to change one institution without affecting others. Hence, we believe that analysing the IDC field sheds light on the causes of change in international regimes expressed by patterns of inertia and innovation.

Notes

1 Roughly US$ 135 billion at 2018 prices (Stein and Rocca 2018).

2 One of the first IDC efforts more clearly directed toward developing countries during this period was the Colombo Plan for Cooperative Economic and Social Development in Asia and the Pacific, conceived at the Commonwealth Conference on Foreign Affairs held in Colombo, Ceylon in January 1950 and launched on 1 July 1951. The plan was a cooperative venture for the economic and social advancement of the peoples of South and Southeast Asia. Though regional in nature, it nonetheless embodied much of the same donor-recipient dynamics established by the IDC regime on a global level with developed countries, especially the United States, responsible for the bulk of the finance (Colombo Plan 2022).

3 Over time, the World Bank has divided itself into five internal institutions: the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD), the International Development Association (IDA), the International Finance Corporation (IFC), the Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA), and the International Centre for Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID).

4 For an analysis of the Soviet aid numbers, see Goldman (1965).

5 An example was Gaddafi's Libyan foreign aid policy. Its main foreign policy goals were Arab unity, the elimination of Israel, the advancement of Islam, support for Palestinians, the elimination of outside influence in the Middle East and Africa, and support for a variety of 'revolutionary' causes (Habib 1986).

6 In 1969, the Commission on International Development, in its Partners in Development report, popularly known as the Pearson Report, although pro-aid, pointed out deficiencies in foreign aid practices worldwide (Pearson 1969). Another relevant study, the Brandt report, produced by the International Commission for International Development Affairs, also highlighted existing deficiencies in foreign aid practices (Brandt 1980).

7 Several studies on these donors' rhetoric, organization, and activities have found that new donors have behaved a lot like old donors, though with a few notable differences (especially in rhetoric) (Rowlands 2008). There is a legitimate argument that SSC activity is not that different from the activity of DAC members. The divide that seems most apparent is between the new donors that are democratic (who often feel greater affinity with the DAC frameworks) and the non-democratic new donors that are more clearly rejecting the DAC principles. See the 'Emerging Donors Study' from the International Development Research Centre for more information regarding this debate.

8 Trilateral cooperation has become more significant and frequent in recent years. While this configuration is not entirely new, this type of arrangement appears to have expanded significantly in number and size over the past decade (Chaturvedi 2012).

9 It is worth noting that there is a genuine possibility that the discontent and resulting institutional innovations had little to do with the basic principles of the structure of the IDC but rather simply the specific roles assigned to specific countries. When new formal institutions do arise – like the AIIB and NDB – they are often organized similarly to more traditional organizations (e.g., roles and votes weighted extensively by financial contribution, and privileged management assignments by country). Curiously, these same features prompted much of the criticism of traditional organizations in the first place.

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Equilíbrio Pontuado no Complexo do Regime da Cooperação Internacional para o Desenvolvimento

Resumo: No passado, a Cooperação Internacional para o Desenvolvimento (CID) era um análogo para a Assistência Oficial ao Desenvolvimento (AOD) no qual três instituições centrais, o Fundo Monetário Internacional (FMI), o Banco Mundial e o Comitê de Assistência ao Desenvolvimento da Organização para Cooperação e Desenvolvimento Econômico (CAD/OCDE) regulavam as práticas dos doadores e receptores. Recentemente, um cenário muito mais complexo e diversificado, caracterizado por novos atores e abordagens, está substituindo esta arquitetura. Este documento analisa as transformações no campo da CID, interpretando estes processos através de uma estrutura analítica das fontes de mudança institucional. Uma de suas principais contribuições é destacar um padrão de "equilíbrio pontuado" através de uma análise histórica teoricamente guiada, que reflete tanto períodos de estase quanto de inovação, ao invés de um processo gradual de mudança. Argumentamos que a inovação depende da insatisfação e dos choques, e que a natureza da invenção depende de uma homogeneidade de interesses entre seus atores proeminentes. Este artigo é baseado em uma agenda de pesquisa que aplica o conceito de equilíbrio pontuado da teoria social à análise dos complexos do regime internacional.

Palavras-chave: Cooperação Internacional para o Desenvolvimento; Assistência Oficial ao Desenvolvimento; Complexos de Regime; Inovação Institucional; Equilíbrio Pontuado.

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