2011

From Donorship to Ownership? Evolving Donor-Government Relationships in Rwanda

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Abstract

Over the course of the last decade there has been an increasing emphasis on recipient-country ownership, or the "effective exercise of a government's authority over development policies and activities, including those that rely…on external resources" (OECD 2007), within the international development community. This new emphasis is not only rhetorical but has resulted in a host of new aid programs promising increased ownership. Broadly speaking, these aid programs are supposed to change the institutional relationships between donors and recipient-country governments and allow aid beneficiaries to have a say over the development policies that impact their daily lives. However, despite their prevalence, we know relatively little about how such aid programs affect donor-government relationships and the policy decision-making process in aid-dependent states.

In the following dissertation project, I analyze four "ownership" aid programs in post-genocide Rwanda: the poverty reduction strategy program; budget support; the aid coordination, harmonization, and alignment framework; and the Rwandan Joint Governance Assessment. In each case study, I look for evidence that the aid program has resulted in the outcomes predicted by their proponents: increased government and citizen influence, and decreased donor influence. Data largely come from fieldwork I conducted in Rwanda during 2009 and 2010.

My analysis suggests that key Rwandan government officials use the idea of ownership to seek influence over decision-making processes. However, the aforementioned aid programs have not resulted in the outcomes predicted by proponents of the ownership approach in two key ways. One, donors have not retreated nor given control over

development policy to recipient countries. Rather they have sought alternative ways of influencing the policy process. Two, what we see emerging in Rwanda is not broad national ownership. Instead, donors work with an elite group of government policymakers. I call this type of aid relationship “centralized collaboration,” meaning that multilateral and bilateral donors work with a small group of domestic actors to design and implement socio-economic development strategies.

I conclude by arguing that this outcome is largely the result of three things: donor preferences, the amount of leverage the GoR is able to exert over donors, and existing state-society relationships. These three factors provide a framework for assessing and analyzing donor-government relationships and ownership aid programs in other aid-dependent states.

FROM DONORSHIP TO OWNERSHIP? EVOLVING DONOR-GOVERNMENT RELATIONSHIPS IN RWANDA

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DISSERTATION

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Political Science in Graduate School of Syracuse University

August 2011

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AfDB/AfDF	African Development Bank / African Development Fund
ACHA	Aid Coordination, Harmonization and Alignment
BSHG	Budget Support Harmonization Group
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CPAF	Common Performance Assessment Framework
DAC	Development Assistance Committee (OECD)
DAD	Development Assistance Database
DFID	Department for International Development (United Kingdom)
DoL	Division of Labour
DPCG	Development Partners Coordination Group
DPAF	Development Partners Assessment Framework
DPM	Development Partners Meeting
DPR	Development Partners Retreat
DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo
EDPRS	Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy
FY	Fiscal Year
GBS	General Budget Support
GNI	Gross National Income
GNP	Gross National Product
GoR	Government of Rwanda
HARPP	Harmonization and Alignment in Rwanda of Projects and Programmes Group
JGA	Joint Governance Assessment
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
HIPC	Heavily Indebted Poor Countries
IDA	International Development Association
IRDP	Institute for Research on Peace Dialogue[1]
MCC	Millennium Challenge Corporation
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MINALOC	Ministry of Local Government
MINECOFIN	Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning
LDC	Least Developed Country
ODA	Official Development Assistance
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
PEPFAR	The U.S. President's Emergency Plan for Aids Relief
PIUs	Parallel Implementation Units
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
RGAC	Rwandan Governance Advisory Council
RPF	Rwandan Patriotic Front
SIDA	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency

[1] French Acronym (*Institut de Recherche et de Dialogue pour la Paix*)

SAL	Structural Adjustment Loan
SBS	Sector Budget Support
SNV	Netherlands Development Organisation[2]
SPA	Strategic Partnership for Africa
SWPs	Sector Wide Approaches
UNAMIR	United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

[2] Dutch Acronym (*Stichting Nederlandse Vrijwilligers*)

Acknowledgements

The process of writing a dissertation is a long and difficult one and would not be feasible without the support of many people. First and foremost, I am indebted to the multiple individuals that were willing to share their thoughts and opinions with me during my time in Rwanda. I have chosen not to list them by name in this work, but my gratitude is great. I am also grateful to the many individuals who were willing to share their connections and knowledge of Rwanda with me. In particular, I would like to thank, David Mwambari and Adam Kyamatare, who got the ball rolling, and Cyanne Loyle, who let me tag along and, in the process, became a trusted confidant and friend.

A big thank you also goes to those that made my stay in Rwanda so lovely. Shirley Randell and her housekeeper Yolande welcome female researchers to Rwanda with open arms. They provide not only a much-needed bed to collapse into at the end of long day, but a community of women ready and willing to assist however they can. Friendships with Hélène Baribeau, Meseret Worku, and Alyson Smith also made my time in Rwanda memorable.

I am also indebted to the members of my dissertation committee; all of who are members of the Department of Political Science at the Maxwell School, Syracuse University. Critical to this dissertation project were the willingness of my advisor and mentor, Hans Peter Schmitz, to let me explore, and his meticulous comments when I finally came up with something. Matthew Cleary has been there from day one of my graduate career, and Gavan Duffy gives out advice with a dose of much appreciated humor. Jonathan Hanson provided excellent comments on previous drafts, and James Bennett has been an infallible supporter throughout my time in graduate school.

I would also like to thank the faculty and staff in the Department of Political Science at Syracuse more broadly. I am particularly grateful for Kristi Andersen's kind words and support, Audie Klotz's intellectual prodding, Mitchell Orenstein's (now at the School of Advanced International Studies, John Hopkins University) encouragement during my first years as a graduate student, and Candy Brooks's willingness to help at a moment's notice. As any graduate student in political science at Syracuse knows, Candy is always your saving grace. The project also benefited tremendously from comments at different points in time from Paolo de Renzio at the Overseas Development Institute and Oxford University, David Simon at Yale University, and Muna Ndulo and Nicolas van de Walle at Cornell University.

My graduate experience was greatly enhanced by those who, at one point or another, were in the trenches with me. I am particularly grateful for friendships with Hannah Allerdice (who was there from the very beginning), Sheree Bennett, Jessica Boscarino, Nadine Georgel, Mark Hibben, Asli Ilgit, Ryan McKean, Angela Narasimhan, Heather Pincock, Deepa Prakash, and Seth Fischer. I am also grateful to Lauren Gordon for taking a chance on a girl from Iowa in overalls (they were in style, I promise!). Our decade long friendship has provided me with a constant source of encouragement.

Finally, I wish to thank my family. To my parents, Mark and Janice Swedlund, thank you for your never-ending supply of encouraging words and your unwavering belief in me. Without you, this dissertation would not have been possible. To my partner, Malte Lierl, who has worn so many hats throughout this process, your intellectual contributions to this project have been great. However, I am most grateful for the love and support that you provided during some of the darkest hours of this journey. Lastly, I wish to thank my grandfather,

Weldon Swedlund, whose intellectual curiosity and zeal for always asking “why?” was so foundational to my upbringing. I dedicate this dissertation to him.

Chapter 1

Introduction

As has been widely acknowledged in developed and developing countries alike, the first generation approach to development assistance was essentially paternalistic and condescending in nature. This is because it was based on the philosophy that the provider of assistance possessed not only financial resources, but also the monopoly of wisdom, as well as the expertise required to transform the beneficiary...The new global consensus explicitly rejects this approach, primarily because development outcomes, as well as the philosophy that underpinned them have been found wanting. Instead of the 'giver knows all' paradigm, the new global consensus places at the centre of development assistance, policy ownership by the receiving country.

-His Excellency Paul Kagame, President of Rwanda
November 22nd, 2006

In developing countries throughout the world, the presence of foreign assistance is ubiquitous. Emblems and flags of donors dot the landscape, often accompanied by signs proclaiming that the American people or the Swedish people or the Japanese (the list goes on and on) people paid for this well, school or hospital. In capital cities, there are enclaves of foreigners working for development agencies and myriad restaurants, hotels, and bars to service them. Governments complain about development agencies poaching their best staff, while residents worry about rising prices due to the influx of foreigners with money in their pockets.

Foreign aid often brings a needed source of capital to developing countries, but, at the same time, it can disrupt the social, political, and economic fabric of everyday life. Over the past decade, there has been a worldwide push to give more control or “ownership” over such changes to those that are supposed to benefit from foreign aid. Instead of being passive recipients of foreign assistance, recipient-country governments and their citizens are supposedly being given the opportunity to take charge of their own development. Instead of being forced to rely on foreigners to tell them what is best, developing countries are purportedly being given the opportunity to decide when and where those wells, hospitals, and schools will be built.

The verdict is still out on whether or not new practices in foreign assistance over the past decade have actually fostered positive change, but a few things are clear. The hotels and bars catering to foreigners haven't closed down, and donor emblems still dot the landscape. So, what has changed?

Findings from this dissertation suggest that what you see more and more often is government boardrooms filled with donor-staff working side-by-side with government staff. Instead of foreigners proclaiming their ideas for economic development from a lectern, they have moved inside the ministries and now sit alongside government officials drafting policy. The line between "donors" and "the state" is increasingly harder to draw. Is this the ownership Rwandan President Kagame seeks in his vision of the new development assistance paradigm? Perhaps not.

1.1. Summary of the Project

Historically, donors have sought to impose development from the outside. Under the "donorship" approach, donors used conditionalities and monetary incentives to pressure recipient countries to make "necessary" donor-identified reforms; or they funded stand-alone, donor-driven aid projects. Both means of disbursing aid are now thought to lead to unsustainable development strategies that are out of touch with the actual needs of people and communities within a particular country. Instead, "ownership" or the "effective exercise of a government's authority over development policies and activities, including those that rely – entirely or partially – on external resources" (OECD 2007) has become the new silver bullet of international development assistance.

Under this new ownership approach, control is thought to shift to the recipient country. Instead of donors calling the shots, recipient countries are supposed to dictate the terms of their own development through an inclusive process involving multiple domestic actors. This is supposed to alter existing donor-government relationships and allow aid beneficiaries to have a say over the development policies and practices that impact their daily lives. But, does ownership actually allow recipient countries to call the shots?

In this dissertation, I analyze "ownership" aid programs in post-genocide Rwanda.[3] In each case study, I am looking for evidence that the ownership aid program has achieved the outcomes predicted by their proponents: increased government and citizen influence, and decreased donor influence. That is, I am looking for evidence that ownership aid programs have resulted in a policy decision-making process that is guided by a wide-array of domestic actors, not by donors.

In this introductory chapter, I provide a synopsis of the dissertation presented in the following chapters. In the forthcoming section, I provide a brief overview of my research design and summarize my findings. Then, in the subsequent section, I outline the forthcoming chapters and explain the significance of the project.

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[3] An aid program is "a time bound intervention involving multiple activities that may cut across sectors, themes and/or geographic areas" (Denmark, Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2011). See Chapter Three for more details.

Research design

In this dissertation, I analyze four "ownership" aid programs in post-genocide and civil war Rwanda. Members of the Government of Rwanda (GoR) leadership frequently (and often aggressively) push for more ownership in Rwanda. The GoR's emphasis on ownership, combined with the eagerness of donors to support the current regime, has spurred several new aid programs intended to foster ownership. If ownership is feasible, it ought to be feasible in Rwanda.

In my case studies, I analyze the following aid programs: Rwanda's poverty reduction strategy and budget support; the aid coordination, harmonization, and alignment framework (ACHA); and the Rwandan Joint Governance Assessment (JGA). For the purposes of this study, Rwanda's experience with the poverty reduction strategy program and budget support constitutes a single case study, as the two aid programs are so interlinked.

Poverty reduction strategies are "nationally owned" development strategies drafted by national governments. Budget support entails a direct transfer of funds into the national treasury. Collectively, the two aid programs purportedly increase ownership by allowing recipient-country governments to outline their own plans for development and then fund such plans using aid deposited into their treasuries. Rwanda finalized an interim poverty reduction strategy in November 2000, and the push for budget support began shortly thereafter.

The ACHA framework is a multifaceted attempt by donors and the government to coordinate and harmonize aid in Rwanda through a series of working groups, donor-government forums, and policies regarding aid practices in Rwanda. The ACHA framework purportedly increases coordination, harmonization, and alignment, allowing donors and the GoR to work together more effectively on government-driven initiatives. Meetings between donors and the GoR resumed immediately following the 1994 genocide and moved to Rwandan soil in 2000; however, the ACHA framework did not really take off until 2002.

The JGA is a collaborative effort between donors and the GoR to establish a common framework for assessing and improving governance in Rwanda. By allowing the GoR to have a say over governance indicators, the JGA purportedly establishes a partnership between the GoR and donors regarding governance. The JGA is much newer than the other aid programs analyzed in this dissertation. While the idea was first put forth in 2005, the first report was not published until 2007. Additionally, while poverty reduction strategies, budget support, and aid coordination mechanisms have been established in other aid-dependent states, the JGA is unique to Rwanda.

The new emphasis on ownership presumes that more government participation will lead to more recipient-country government influence, decrease the influence of donors over development policy, and increase the influence of citizens over policy decision-making. Therefore, in each case study, I look for evidence that the introduction of the aid program(s) has: (1) increased the influence of the recipient-country government, (2) decreased donor influence over policy-decision making, and (3) increased the influence of Rwandan citizens.

Throughout the dissertation, I make an important distinction between participation and influence. That is, it is not enough that governments are more *involved* in the policy process, there has to be evidence that they have more *influence* over the policy process. Similarly, it is not enough for citizens to merely participate more; there must be evidence that citizens have more influence over the policy decision-making process. I also pay close attention to changes in both the *degree* of donor influence (i.e. how much?) and the *type* of donor influence (i.e. what kind?).

To build my case studies I use a process-tracing methodology. Instead of relying on covariation between units, process tracing connects the dots over time to establish a causal narrative, paying particular attention to causal mechanisms. Validity is increased when we find similar trends across the aid programs and rule out alternative explanations using sound evidence.

Most of the data for my dissertation come from in-country fieldwork that I completed in 2009 and 2010. While in the field, I conducted forty-seven interviews with donor, embassy, and NGO staff, Rwandan government officials, and independent consultants (see Appendix 1, pg. 177). Additionally, I observed relevant meetings and conferences whenever permitted. To supplement fieldwork, I also conducted substantial textual analysis on pertinent documents produced by the GoR and donors (see Appendix 2, pg. 179).

Findings

My case studies of ownership aid programs in Rwanda suggest that government policymakers actively seek to influence decision-making processes. However, the aforementioned aid programs have not resulted in the outcomes predicted by proponents of the ownership approach in two key ways. One, donors have neither retreated nor given control over development to recipient countries. They are simply influencing the policy process in different ways. Two, what we see emerging in Rwanda is not broad national ownership. Instead, donors work with an elite group of government policymakers. I call this type of aid relationship "centralized collaboration," meaning that multilateral and bilateral donors work with a small group of domestic actors to design and implement socio-economic development strategies.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, donors have been unwilling to relinquish their authority. Instead, the Government of Rwanda has become like a co-pilot to donors—sometimes allowed to take the wheel, but still very much dependent on aid contributions and bound by the parameters set up by donors. Instead of fostering a more inclusive political space, these new aid programs perpetuate a highly centralized state. Rather than increasing domestic participation, the aid modalities I examined allow political authority to remain centralized with the executive.

Instead of pressuring from the outside, my case studies suggest that donors now increasingly exert influence from the inside. Donors, particularly those who advocate for more recipient-country ownership, increasingly appear to engage with the state. Instead of working against it, *they work with it and through it*. As a result, the relationship between donors and the GoR is less hierarchical and less outwardly antagonistic. However, donors to Rwanda are certainly not subservient to the government. Instead of relinquishing authority, donors merely shifted their role to one that that is less visible and more technical. This qualitative change was most apparent among those donors, like the United Kingdom, that emphasize ownership as a matter of their own internal policy.

At the same time, my cases studies also suggest that, rather than opening the Rwandan political space, the new emphasis on ownership has further centralized authority into the hands of a select group of domestic actors. Although the emphasis on ownership has not led donors to abandon their influence over the policy process completely, it has given the GoR an opening. Ownership aid programs have integrated top GoR officials into policy decision-making processes, but they have excluded other domestic actors. Domestic stakeholders, such as civil society groups, have recently been invited to sit at the table.

However, my case studies suggest that their involvement is typically only symbolic or a way of informing such actors to the policy agenda already decided by the executive branch.

1.2. Chapter Outline

This dissertation is composed of eight chapters, including this introduction. Chapters four through seven comprise the major analytical portion of the dissertation, with chapters five through seven presenting the case studies. Chapter eight concludes by summarizing my empirical findings, outlining the implications of these findings, and discussing their broader applicability.

In chapter two, I present the theoretical underpinnings of this project. This chapter documents prominent critiques of foreign aid and explains why "ownership" is thought to be a solution to these critiques. The chapter's purpose is to provide the reader with a better sense of where the new emphasis on recipient-country ownership comes from, what problems it seeks to address, and the challenges facing this new approach to international development.

In chapter three, I explain my method and research design in greater detail. I summarize my independent and dependent variables and explain the method I used to analyze my cases, process tracing. I also justify my case selection and summarize my three case studies. Lastly, I explain my data sources and the fieldwork I conducted in Rwanda for this dissertation project.

In chapter four, I outline the contemporary history of development in Rwanda and examine the major donors currently providing development aid to Rwanda. In order to understand contemporary development schemes and practices, it is important for the reader to have a basic understanding of the Rwandan context. Additionally, how ownership plays out in a particular country is likely to be affected by both the country context and who the country's donors are.

In chapter five, I focus on the aid programs most associated with the ownership approach: poverty reduction strategies and budget support. I conclude that, in Rwanda, neither has led to a retreat of the donor. Donors simply seek to influence policy decision-making in alternative ways. In fact, in Rwanda, budget support donors appear to actually have more influence – not less – than non-budget support donors. Additionally, far from opening the political process to citizen input and criticism, introducing these two aid modalities has allowed the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development (MINECOFIN)[4] to dominate domestic development policy processes.

In chapter six, I present the findings from my case study on the aid coordination, harmonization, and alignment (ACHA) framework. While the ACHA framework has increased coordination, harmonization, and alignment (at least to some degree), it has not decreased donor influence. Donors that readily support the ACHA framework have merely become more integrated into state structures; while other donors have largely continued business as usual. In either case, bilateral negotiations still take precedence, and donors are still clearly influential. At the same time, the ACHA framework has largely excluded civil society, centralizing influence with donors and a select group of domestic actors.

In chapter seven, I present the findings from my case study on the Rwandan Joint Governance Assessment (JGA). I find that the JGA has allowed the GoR a larger platform for their governance agenda, and that donors often remain at the periphery of governance debates. This comes at a cost to other domestic actors. Civil society groups, local

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[4] From here on out, I refer to the Rwandan Ministry of Finance and Economic Development by its French acronym, MINECOFIN or simply as the ministry of finance.

governments, and even parliament are periphery of debates of consequence regarding governance in Rwanda. The JGA has not changed this. Instead, the aid program has (thus far) assisted in keeping governance debates on governance centralized at the national level.

In the concluding chapter, I summarize the core findings of the empirical research presented in chapters four through seven. I suggest that the ownership approach has altered the institutional relationship between donors and the GoR, but not in the ways predicted. Instead of decreasing donor influence, the ownership approach has merely made influence less transparent. Additionally, instead of increasing citizen influence, the new emphasis on ownership permits the executive branch of the GoR to monopolize domestic authority.

I conclude by arguing that this outcome is largely the result of three things: donor preferences, the amount of leverage the GoR is able to exert over donors, and existing state-society relationships. These three factors provide a framework for assessing and analyzing donor-government relationships and ownership aid programs in other aid-dependent states and suggest several policy implications for development practitioners.

1.3. Significance of the Project

This dissertation is part of a growing body of literature that is concerned less with the *quantitative* amount of foreign aid, and more with the *quality* of foreign aid. As frustration with foreign aid continues to grow, many scholars and practitioners are recognizing that how aid is disbursed is central to its impact, and concluding that the answer is not just more aid but better aid. The new emphasis on recipient-country ownership proposes to transform the relationship between government policymakers and donors and, as a result, make aid more effective. However, its actual impact in recipient countries is still largely unknown.

My dissertation is both an empirical examination of the impact of ownership aid programs in one recipient country, and an opportunity to build theory on donor-government relationships more broadly. Despite the fact that we know that donor-government relationships impact the quality of foreign aid (Pomerantz 2004), we know very little about the factors that shape the relationship between donors and recipient countries, and how variations in this relationship change the way foreign aid is distributed. My dissertation narrows in on the relationship between donors and government policymakers. Only by understanding this relationship and its policy implications, can we begin to improve the effectiveness of foreign assistance.

Chapter 2
The Problem with Ownership

Historically, foreign aid has served a variety of diplomatic, development, and commercial functions (Lancaster 2007), but the major benchmark for aid effectiveness has typically been economic growth. However, isolating the relationship between aid and growth has been anything but straightforward. At a simplistic level, there appears to be no direct relationship between foreign aid and growth. Some countries that have received huge influxes of foreign aid, such as Botswana, Indonesia, and Korea, have experienced rapid economic growth, but others, such as Haiti, Papua New Guinea, Somalia, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, have experienced spiraling poverty (Radelet 2006). Growth has been particularly slow in Sub-Saharan Africa. Despite the fact that more than $500 billion dollars (the equivalent of four Marshall Aid Plans) was dispersed in Africa from 1960-1997, per capita GDP in Sub-Saharan Africa actually declined throughout much of this period (Ayodele et al. 2005).

The purpose of this chapter is to provide the reader with a better sense of where the new emphasis on recipient-country ownership comes from, what problems it seeks to address, and the challenges facing this new approach to international development. I begin by outlining the tenuous relationship between foreign aid and growth, noting divergent schools of thought on the subject. I then argue that in order to fully understand the relationship between aid and growth we have to open the black box of aid, exposing the multiple links in the causal chain connecting aid to county outcomes.

In this dissertation project, I focus on the link between donors and policymakers in recipient countries. Although relatively little is known about this link, principal-agent theory suggests that it will be fraught with moral hazard and adverse selection problems. The link between donors and recipient-countries is further challenged by a broken feedback loop, which makes it difficult for beneficiaries to express discontent when an aid policy is not working.

The new emphasis on recipient country ownership attempts to correct for this broken feedback loop by encouraging country-level policy decision-making. Instead of aid policy being determined in boardrooms in Washington, DC and Brussels, aid policy is supposed to be decided in recipient-countries. Proponents of ownership argue that by increasing the participation and influence of recipient-country governments, donor influence will decrease and citizen influence will increase. However, these predictions are based on several highly problematic assumptions.

The chapter is composed of five major sections. I begin by reviewing the literature on aid and growth and the various policy responses to widespread pessimism regarding the ability of foreign aid to promote economic and social development. I then make a case for opening up the black box of foreign assistance and focusing on the relationship between donors and policymakers. I summarize principal-agent theory and the challenges facing foreign aid and explain what the new, global emphasis on ownership is predicted to change about the way aid is delivered. I conclude by arguing that the new emphasis on ownership is based on three faulty assumptions: (1) greater participation does not mean greater influence; (2) donors are unlikely to relinquish their influence; and (3) government influence doesn't equal national influence. These problematic assumptions make it unlikely that the ownership approach will actually result in the predicted outcomes.

2.1. Aid, Growth, and Development

In this section, I outline divergent opinions on the relationship between aid and growth. When I use the term "foreign aid," I am primarily referring to what some call "development aid" or "development assistance." Alternative forms of aid, such as debt relief and humanitarian aid, comprise a significant part of aid totals, but they are not central to the research questions of this dissertation. Foreign aid totals are typically captured by official development assistance (ODA) figures recorded by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), which define ODA as:

> Flows of official financing administered with the promotion of the economic development and welfare of developing countries as the main objective, and which are concessional in character with a grant element of at least 25 percent (using a fixed 10 percent rate of discount). By convention, ODA flows comprise contributions of donor government agencies, at all levels, to developing countries ("bilateral ODA") and to multilateral institutions. Lending by export credit agencies—with the pure purpose of export promotion—is excluded (OECD 2003).

ODA totals exclude certain types of development assistance, such as remittances, foreign direct investments, or aid from private donations.[5] Furthermore, ODA from countries such as China, who choose not to submit their aid totals to the OECD, is not captured in ODA totals.

Scholarly views on aid and growth

Over the course of the last thirty years, three broad views on the relationship between aid and growth have emerged in the scholarly literature on foreign aid.[6] Divergent opinions

[5] These are not insignificant sources of funding. The Center for Global Prosperity at the Hudson Institute reports that, in 2007, philanthropic flows equaled $49 billion, remittances $145 billion, and private investment $345 billion. In comparison, official flows equaled $107 billion (Center for Global Prosperity 2009, 18).

are often based on disputes over methods and data, which continue to rage despite new econometric techniques and better (although still very limited) data.

First, *on average, aid has a positive relationship with growth* (see, for example, Hansen and Tarp 2000; 2001; Lensink and White 2001; Sachs et al. 2004). That is, while aid has not worked in every country, on average and controlling for other factors (such as geography, political conflict, policies, and institutions), aid has contributed to growth. Scholars in this camp argue that, after controlling for certain variables and diminishing returns, a positive relationship between aid and growth emerges. However, they concede that there is significant variation around the trend line.

Second, *aid has no effect on growth and may actually undermine development and growth* (see, for example, Mosley 1980; Mosley, Hudson, and Horrell 1987; Rajan and Subramanian 2008). Scholars in this camp point to the potential for aid to undermine private sector investment incentives and productivity, to reduce domestic savings, and to cause currency to appreciate and undermine the profitability of tradable goods ("Dutch Disease"). While these studies have been highly influential, few studies have reached this conclusion in the past decade. Additionally, many of these studies only examine aggregate aid, which rules out the (likely) possibility that different types of aid have different types of effects on growth (Radelet 2006).

Third, *aid has a conditional relationship with growth*. That is, aid promotes growth under certain circumstances or conditions. Conditions argued to be important include <u>recipient-country characteristics</u> (e.g., domestic policy, type of government, and warfare); <u>donor practices</u> (e.g., aid fads, special interests, and political motivations); and <u>type of aid</u>

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[6] This literature review draws heavily from Radelet (2006).

(e.g., conditional, untied, and multilateral). The most vibrant debate in this camp centers around Burnside and Dollar's (2000) claim that aid produces better outcomes in countries with good policy and, therefore, by extension should be targeted to countries with good policy.[7] While conventional wisdom says that better policies lead to more effective aid, several recent papers have called this assumption in to question (see, for example, Collier and Dollar 2002; Hudson and Mosley 2001; Hansen and Tarp 2001, 2000; Easterly, Levine, and Roodman 2004).

Policy actions on aid

These three scholarly perspectives map on to three, divergent policy tactics: stop aid; increase aid; and make aid more effective. Citing evidence that aid has not produced aggregate economic growth, the "aid pessimists" (Wright and Winters 2011) argue that donors and recipient states should abandon foreign aid altogether. This perspective has gained traction due to Moyo's (2009) popular book, *Dead Aid*. However, given that both donors and recipients remain deeply invested in the current aid structure, abandoning aid altogether is unlikely to happen anytime soon.

According to the "aid optimists" (Wright and Winters 2011), the solution is to increase aggregate aid flows. As part of its push to reach the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by 2015, the UN is once again urging developed countries to contribute at least .7% of their GNP to ODA,[8] and, at the G8 summit in Gleneagles in 2005, rich countries pledged to dramatically increase their contributions to development assistance from $80 billion in

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[7] This is exactly what the new US Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) does (for more details, see http://www.mcc.gov/).

[8] This target, first pledged in a 1970 General Assembly Resolution, was reaffirmed twice in 2002 at the International Conference on Financing for Development in Monterrey, Mexico and at the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg, South Africa.

2005 to $130 billion in 2010 (OECD 2009c). As a means of channeling this new funding, a host of new initiatives, such as Tony Blair's Commission for Africa, George W. Bush's President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), and the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC), have sprung up; each promising billions more in aid.

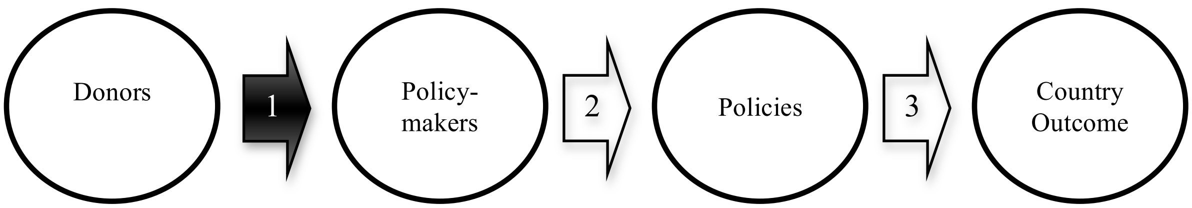
For those who believe that aid has a conditional effect on growth, the solution is to increase the *effectiveness* of aid. That is, instead of (a) abandoning aid or (b) increasing it, the focus should be on improving the quality of the aid already being distributed. This is the most dominant school, as it requires neither a blind faith in aid, nor a willingness to abandon aid all together. Scholars and practitioners in this school advocate for evidence-based research on specific aid practices in order to decipher what works and what does not. As part of the effectiveness agenda, a host of edited volumes and policy papers (often based on country case studies) have emerged that draw on the lessons of ineffective aid to produce policy recommendations on how to "reform," "improve" or make aid "smarter" (see, for example, Devarajan, Dollar, and Holmgren 2001; Joseph and Gillies 2009; Carlsson, Somolekae, and van de Walle 1997; van de Walle and Johnston 1996).

2.2. Opening the "Black Box"

While improving the effectiveness of aid is an important goal, figuring out how to do so has been quite challenging. Much of the research on foreign aid runs into the same problem over and over again. After disbursement, aid travels through a complex causal chain, making it extremely difficult to isolate aid's impact on particular country outcomes. Controlling for the numerous variables that likely impact foreign aid (not to mention problems of endogeneity) is all but impossible. Consequently, isolating the relationship between aid and growth (or lack of growth) is incredibly difficult.

Given this reality, senior World Bank economists François Bourguignon and Mark Sundberg argue in a 2007 article in *The American Economic Review* that to improve aid effectiveness we must open up the "black box" of aid. That is, instead of blindly trying to link donor inputs to development outcomes, we need to examine the causality chain behind aid. Bourguignon and Sundberg identify three types of links inside the black box: donors to policymakers, policymakers to policies, and policies to outcome. Figure 2.1 below depicts an adoption of the causality chain Bourguignon and Sundberg layout in their article.

Figure 2.1: Opening the Black Box



Source: Adopted from Bourguignon and Sundberg (2007: 312)

By "policies to outcomes" (arrow 3), Bourguignon and Sundberg (2007) refer to knowledge at the micro or project level. For example, how does the tax structure or trade policy of a state affect growth and/or poverty? Do micro-finance programs contribute to poverty reduction? Research in this area is an essential part of understanding the relationship between aid and growth and is a growing part of the development literature, especially in light of the new advances in impact evaluations based on experimental or quasi-experimental designs (see, for example, Banerjee and Duflo 2011; Karlan and Appel 2011).

"Policymakers to policy" (arrow 2) refers to the link between systems of governance and policy choices. For example, do democratic systems lead to better economic policy? As Bourguignon and Sundberg point out, in practice, most research bypasses policy choices, instead pointing to the importance of governance on outcomes (for example, Svensson 1999; Boone 1996). Consequently, our understanding of this link is limited.

The last link, "donors to policymakers" (arrow 1), refers to the relationship between donors and domestic policymakers (typically government officials). As Bourguignon and Sundberg point out, this link is largely built on a body of circumstantial evidence stemming from years of failed aid efforts. In other words, we know more about what does not work than what actually works.

This dissertation narrows in on the link between donors and policymakers. Not only is this the link that we know the least about, but it is also the beginning of the causality chain. Consequently, its impact will be felt all the way down the line. As Pomerantz (2004) notes, the quality of the relationship between donors and domestic policymakers is likely more influential on policy directions and development outcomes than aid money itself. If aid is not distributed in a way that is conducive to good policymaking and good policies then it is unlikely to result in the desired country outcomes.

2.3. Relationship between Donors and Policymakers

The little that we do know about the link between donors and policymakers is usefully summarized using principal-agent theory, also known as agency theory. Principal-agent theory, a subset of institutional economics, is a set of assumptions and rules that are thought to underlie all modern organizations, including organizations designed to distribute foreign aid. This theory provides insight in to why the link between donors and policymakers is often fraught with challenges.

By donors, I mean both <u>bilateral</u> donors (e.g., the United States and Sweden) and <u>multilateral</u> donors (e.g., international finance intuitions (IFIs) like the World Bank and international organizations like the United Nations). Consistent with my working definition of foreign aid, I exclude donors that only distribute private donations (for example, the Clinton or Gates Foundations).

By policymakers, I mean the key domestic decision makers. Who the key policymakers are can vary from context to context. However, they generally hold positions of authority (either by election or by force) in the domestic government.

Principal-agent theory

Principal-agent theory begins with the observation that modern organizations are often hierarchically structured. In other words, they are made up of both principals and agents, with principals giving instructions to agents. Because principals cannot make all decisions and carry out all tasks by themselves, they delegate some of the work to agents. In doing so, they cede full control of information and activities. This results in two types of problems.

First, agents may choose to ignore the principal's instructions, instead carrying out tasks in a way that benefits their own interests. This is called the problem of **moral hazard**. In the case of foreign aid, a moral hazard problem arises when foreign aid is redirected towards non-desirable purposes. For example, a recipient-country government is often given foreign aid for the purposes of poverty alleviation. However, instead of allocating aid to the poor, it is sometimes used to support undesirable military operations or deposited into personal bank accounts.

Second, given that agents may have access to information that principals do not, they might manipulate information in ways that run contrary to the principal's interests. This is called the problem of **adverse selection**. In the case of foreign aid, an adverse selection problem arises when need is inflated for personal gain. For example, if the local leaders who are responsible for allocating food aid artificially inflate the number of persons requiring assistance, there will be a surplus. Leaders are then able to use the surplus for their own gain, accumulating more for their own families or selling it on the black market for a profit.

Both moral hazard and adverse selection are inherent problems when tasks are delegated. Therefore, they are, to some degree, unavoidable in all modern, hierarchical organizations—including aid agencies. Consequently, it is important for development agencies to design institutions that mitigate the risk of moral hazard and adverse selection whenever possible.

The broken information feedback loop

The problems of moral hazard and adverse selection are common in all modern organizations and have been explored in detail in agency theory. However, as Martens explains below, an exceptional problem of foreign aid is a broken information feedback loop:

> …a unique and most striking characteristic of foreign aid is that the people for whose benefit aid agencies work are not the same as those from whom their revenues are obtained; they actually live in different countries and different political constituencies. This geographical and political separation between beneficiaries and taxpayers block the normal performance feedback process: beneficiaries may be able to observe performance but cannot modulate payments (rewards to the agents) as a function of performance (Martens 2002, 14).

Domestic redistribution programs, such as Medicare, face a number of principal-agent problems. However, contrary to foreign aid programs, taxpayers and beneficiaries are the same people. Consequently, they have information about success and failure and can reward accordingly. On the other hand, dissatisfied foreign aid beneficiaries have no way to express discontent to the taxpayers who are footing the aid bill, if foreign assistance is not meeting their needs. The result is a broken feedback loop.

This broken feedback loop is exacerbated by the complex chain of principals and agents involved in aid distribution. The complex chain of principals and agents weakens information flows, introduces a myriad of motivations, and makes monitoring and accountability difficult (Radelet 2006). Donors themselves are complex organizations, made up of the taxpayers that fund them, the politicians that allocate taxpayers' money, donor agencies, and contractors. On the recipient side, a similarly complex relationship exists between recipient-country governments, NGOs (who receive and distribute aid), and the intended beneficiaries of aid. These multiple principal-agent relationships exacerbate the problems inherent in hierarchical modern organizations.

Conditionality

One proposed solution to the challenges identified by principal-agent theory is conditionality. Conditionality is most often identified with structural adjustment loans. However, all donors use conditionality to some degree. The rationale for conditionality is at least partially based on principal-agent theory. The idea is that if donors tie aid to certain policy conditions or actions that are seen as necessary for growth, adverse selection and moral hazard problems will be mitigated. However, conditionality faces several challenges, and the practice has faced intense criticism since the early 1990s.

First, it is often unclear what policies are the most appropriate (and in what context). Therefore, when selecting conditions, donors may elect to include conditions that are unhelpful or even damaging. This challenge is exacerbated by a broken feedback loop because beneficiaries have few mechanisms at their disposal to express dissatisfaction. Second, aid is often highly political, and the conditions attached to aid may serve donors more than recipients. For example, some donors "tie" aid or require the recipient-country to spend aid money in the country that grants the aid. For example, the United States requires the majority of food aid to be produced and packaged in the US, even though higher food prices and added shipping costs means that less food per dollar is delivered to the recipient country. Third, the logic behind conditionality itself might be quite problematic. As Streeten succinctly puts it, “Why would a donor pay a recipient to do something that is anyway in his own interest? And if it is not in his interest, why would the recipient do it anyways?” (Streeten 1988, as quoted in Martens 2002, 9).

Explanations for why conditionality has not produced better outcomes vary as widely as the explanations for foreign aid’s failure overall,[9] and research on the topic has also found it difficult to isolate the impact of conditionality, given the multiple intervening variables. As Radelet (2006) notes, conditionality has mirrored thinking about development, consequently the types of conditions required by donors have historically varied.[10] Therefore, it is possible that the problem is not conditionality but the type of development policy pursued.

2.4. From Donorship to Ownership

Despite little hard evidence explaining why conditionality does not seem to work, there is a growing consensus that (overt) conditionality has failed (Collier 1997) and that a new approach is needed. The narrative that has emerged to explain conditionality’s “failure” is that conditionality does not produce the desired outcomes because it relies on top-down

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[9] For example, Dollar and Svensson (2000) argue that SALs succeed or fail based on domestic political-economy forces. Alternative, Collier et al. (1997) argues that contemporary uses of conditionality have failed, because they focus on “inducements.” This results in a piece meal approach to reform and crowds out other uses of conditionality.

[10] A state-led approach dominated in the 1950s and 1960s, while a basic human needs approach took over in the 1970s. In the 1980s and early 1990s, the focus became open markets, shifting in the mid-1990s to intuitions. Currently, the debate centers around whether or not aid should be conditional on good policy and democratic reform (Radelet 2006).

pressure from donors to act in externally prescribed ways. Instead of being decided on by beneficiaries, policy is being dictated by donors. This narrative is clearly apparent in a 2009 Oxfam report, which argues that:

> 50 years of foreign aid have proven that even when they understand how development happened, donors cannot reduce poverty by themselves. When donors impose solutions, the solutions are often wrong from the context. Even when development solutions are right, they are rarely implemented properly. That is history's lesson. (Oxfam 2009, 4).

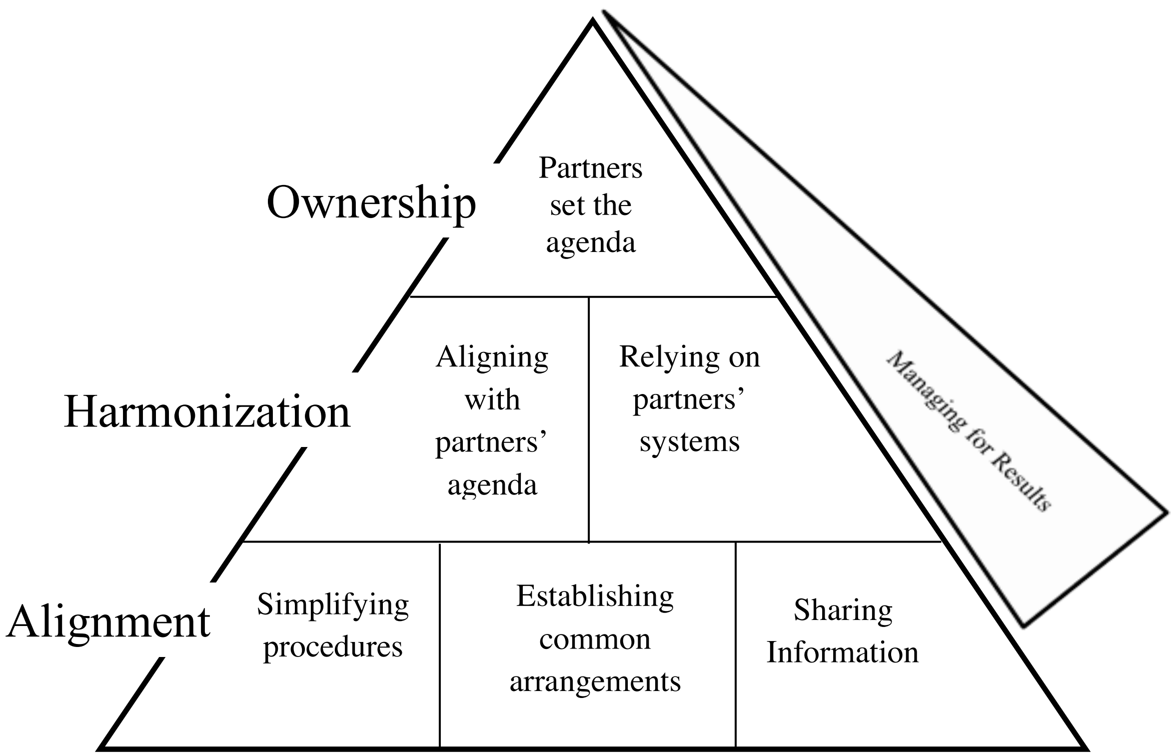
Out of this narrative has emerged an approach to development that emphasizes *local ownership*. As Wood notes, after the Cold War "a consensus emerged that aid would be most effective if donors forged better partnerships with recipient governments, and if those governments in turn had greater 'ownership' of policies" (2005, 394). The following section examines the concept of ownership and its promises in greater depth.

Aid effectiveness and the Paris Agenda

Ownership is the cornerstone of a global policy agenda that was solidified in a series of international declarations on aid effectiveness in the early 2000s. The most notable of these declarations is the 2005 *Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness*. The Paris Declaration puts forth an agenda for increasing aid effectiveness known as the Paris Agenda or the Paris Consensus and was signed by more than 140 developed and developing countries and international organizations.

The Paris Agenda puts forth a set of principals (known as the "Paris Principals") that are seen as instrumental to improved aid effectiveness (see figure 2.2). At the heart of the Paris Agenda is ownership (Hayman 2006). While principals such as alignment and harmonization are advocated for on their own merits, they are most often tied to the need for ownership. As figure 2.2 suggests, both harmonization and alignment are seen as improving ownership by ensuring that donors coalesce around an agenda set by "partners," i.e. recipient-country governments.

Figure 2.2: Partnership for Great Aid Effectiveness[11]



Source: OECD (2005a, 18)

Since its pronouncement in 2005, the Paris Declaration has resulted in a multitude of working groups and subsequent meetings (both between high-level dignitaries and regional and local working groups). In 2008, the third high-level forum on aid effectiveness took place in Accra, Ghana. The forum resulted in the *Accra Agenda for Action* (AAA), which follows up on the agenda outlined in Paris.[12] The Paris Declaration also led to the so-called "Paris Survey," an annual evaluation rubric that rates recipient countries and donors on the principals outlined in the declaration.

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[11] A fifth principal, mutual accountability, would later be added to the four principals depicted in the figure.
[12] The fourth high-level forum on aid effectiveness will take place in Busan, South Korea from November 29th to December 1st, 2011.

The new emphasis on recipient-country ownership is more than just clever wording for development practitioners. Theoretically, ownership is now seen as essential to improving aid effectiveness.[13] Suggesting that the Paris Agenda is rooted in a broad base of evidence, one development practitioner summarizes the predictions of the ownership approach in this way, "Aid delivered in the spirit of Paris at the very least shifts the balance of probabilities" (Armon 2007, 653).

What is ownership?

Although the concept of ownership currently dominates the development policy agenda, there is actually a very poor understanding of what the word means. The OECD statistical glossary defines ownership as the "the effective exercise of a government's authority over development policies and activities, including those that rely – entirely or partially – on external resources" (OECD 2007). Yet, what does ownership actually look like in practice? How do donors actually encourage ownership? What domestic actors are responsible for ownership? These and other questions have gone largely unanswered in the academic and policy literature on ownership and development.

While a degree of variation does exist in understandings of ownership,[14] the most widespread understanding is a *change in the institutional relationship between donors and recipient country governments.* That is, a change in the "rules of the game" that guide the interactions between donors and recipient-country governments (North 1990).

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[13] Many of the notions embedded in the ownership model are not new. In fact, the authors of a report commissioned by the World Bank in 1969 make very similar points (Pearson 1969). However, over the past decade, these concepts have profoundly shifted the worldwide discourse on development in ways that they had not previously.

[14] For example, an IMF working paper depicts ownership as "buy-in" by the recipient state (Boughton and Mourmouras 2002).

In the past, donors sought development primarily from the outside. Under the "donorship" approach, which is exemplified by conditionality, donors used monetary incentives to try and pressure recipient countries to make what they saw as needed reforms and improvements. Alternatively, under the new ownership approach, control is supposed to shift to the recipient-country. Instead of donors calling the shots, recipient-country governments are supposed to dictate the terms of their own development.

Predictions of ownership

Just as there is variation in how ownership is defined, there is variation in what ownership is predicted to change. However, the common thread running through pro-ownership work is the idea that ownership allows recipient-country governments to participate more in policymaking. In other words, ownership gives recipient-countries a seat at the table.

Increasing the participation of recipient-country governments is predicted to have three effects: increase the influence of recipient-country governments; decrease the influence of donors; and increase the influence of domestic citizens. The UK's Department for International Development succinctly articulated these three predictions in a 2005 white paper:

> For us, 'country ownership' requires that the country has **leadership** over its development policies. It requires partner governments **in consultation with citizens** to define a poverty reduction programme, which **donors can support**….We do not only equate country ownership with government ownership. We believe that civil society, including poor people, should also have a voice and stake in their development, and that governments should be accountable to them (DFID 2005, 11).

In other words, as the participation of recipient-countries increases, recipient-countries will exercise more influence over development policy and donors will take a step back, letting governments lead. As a result, citizens will be better able to shape the policies that affect their lives. The following section explains these three predictions in greater detail.

First, *the influence of the recipient-country government will increase*. Implicit in most pro-ownership work is the idea that as recipient-countries participate in policy decision-making they will acquire more influence over policymaking; i.e., recipient-countries will "set the agenda" and have more say over the development policies funding by foreign assistance. The idea that recipient-country governments will gain more influence is reflected in the 2005 *Paris Declaration*, in which recipient-countries commit to, "[e]xercise leadership in developing and implementing their national development strategies through broad consultative processes," and to "[t]ake the lead in co-ordinating aid at all levels in conjunction with other development resources in dialogue with donors and encouraging the participation of civil society and the private sector" (OECD 2005, 3).

Second, *donor influence will decrease*. This prediction is not often explicitly stated. However, implicit in conversations about ownership is the assumption that, as recipient-countries take a more active role in development, donor influence will decrease as authority and influence transfers to recipient-country governments. Often this sentiment is expressed in the idea that recipient-countries should "lead." For example, the recent publication by Oxfam America argues that, "Ultimately, ownership means supporting effective states and active citizens' efforts to determine how they use aid resources as part of their broader development agenda" (2009, 37). The document equates ownership with control or letting the recipient-country lead, and argues for changing US aid practices to be more inline with ownership principles and commitments, such as untied aid, fewer earmarks, and increased budget support. Similarly, donors signing on to the Paris Declaration commit to "[r]espect partner country leadership and help strengthen their capacity to exercise it" (2005c, 3). In other words, donors commit to supporting and following recipient-country governments.

Third, *citizen influence and participation will increase*. The assumption here is that as recipient-country governments become more responsible for development policy, the opportunities for citizens to influence development policy will increase. Donors are not accountable to citizens. However, domestic governments require citizens to stay in power, and citizens are able to sanction them for poor performance through electoral and civil society mechanisms. Introducing aid programs that emphasis ownership are predicted to change the ability of citizens to exercise influence over domestic policymakers. According to Hudson, "The impact of aid on the scope for domestic accountability depends on the extent to which recipient governments are able to control and manage the aid that they receive, incorporate it in their policy cycle, and spend it according to their own developmental priorities" (Hudson and GOVNET Secretariat 2009, 9)

Implicit in each of these predictions is the idea that ownership will help fix the broken feedback loop identified in the previous section. By giving more authority to recipient-country governments, the thinking is that development policies become more aligned with the actual needs of beneficiaries, because decision-making supposedly takes place closer to the people who are supposed to benefit from development. According the aforementioned Oxfam report "…the best hope for poor people lies in their own capacity to require accountability and performance from their governments. That is why ownership matters" (2009, 37).

2.5. The Problem of Faulty Assumptions

The picture presented by pro-ownership scholars and policymakers provides a convenient story to combat the perceived lack of aid effectiveness. However, it likely oversimplifies reality. Both the older literature on foreign aid and newer work specifically on ownership and ownership aid programs point out a number of factors that directly challenge the assumptions and predictions implicit in the story of ownership outlined above.[15]

(1) Greater participation doesn't mean greater influence

The rhetoric on ownership in the literature on foreign aid often fails to distinguish between participation and influence. However, conflating the two is highly problematic, because it ignores important nuances in the positioning power of recipient-country governments. Giving recipient-countries a seat at the table does not automatically give them more influence over policy outcomes;. Assuming that participation is the same thing as influence is not only logically incorrect but ignores long-standing power asymmetries between donors and recipient-country governments.

Ownership, as it is defined above, may not actually be feasible in most aid-dependent states. For example, Booth (2008) argues the new ownership agenda requires political vision and leadership from domestic actors. However, we rarely see this in countries heavily dependent on foreign aid. Similarly, Whitfield and her colleagues argue that the characteristics of African states influence how much ownership a state can acquire (Whitfield 2009; Whitfield and Maipose 2008). If states do not have certain characteristics, such as the ability to "project non-negotiability and the confidence that its actions will not lead to donors

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[15] Much on the newer literature on ownership is critical of particular practices, such as poverty reduction strategy papers and general budget support. See chapter five (pg. 104) for a more extended discussion of this literature.

pulling out (or that it can manage aid on its own if they do)," then it is unlikely that ownership will translate in to more than a nice headline or catchphrase (Whitfield 2009, 329).

Additionally, letting the recipient-country set the agenda is not the only alternative to the old donorship approach. Several different types of relationships between donors and recipient governments are possible. For example, ownership and partnership are often used interchangeably (see, for example, Millennium Challenge Corporation 2010; European Parliament Council Commission 2006). However, at least theoretically, the two terms describe very different types of relationships. Partnership conveys the need for an equal relationship between two or more "partners," whereas ownership conveys a situation in which one actor, in this case the recipient country, takes the lead.

(2) Donors are unlikely to relinquish their influence

There is also very little reason, either theoretically or empirically, to assume that donors will be willing to relinquish their influence over development policy. Not only is it likely to be bureaucratically challenging, but it also requires donors to voluntarily give up control over vast sums of money that they are charged with using wisely for diplomatic, development, and/or commercial purposes. This is obviously unrealistic (and probably unwise). Donors are actors with interests and reputations to uphold. They are not neutral parties but remain deeply invested in the process. Furthermore, donors have preferences that are not likely to change overnight. However, these political-economic factors are largely unaccounted for in the ownership predictions articulated above (de Renzio 2006).

Recently, several scholars have made a similar point when suggesting that there is a gap between the rhetoric of ownership and actual practices on the ground. For example, some have questioned whether the aid system is truly able to provide ownership given it continues to rely on conditionalities (Easterly 2008; Whitfield 2009). Based on country case studies of "ownership" in several African countries, Whitfield and her colleagues suggest that "aid officials start out with a commitment to ownership defined as control over policies, but as soon as there is some disagreement over policy choices they tend to fall back on a definition of ownership as commitment to their preferred policies" (Whitfield 2009, 2). In other words, donors are willing to let recipient-country governments set the agenda, as long as it is their agenda. This raises the question: does ownership actually change anything?

(3) Government influence doesn't equal national influence

Even if governments are granted more influence over the policy process, there is very little reason to believe that citizen influence will increase as a result of this change. In fact, the opposite may occur. Ownership is presumed to increase domestic accountability by shortening the feedback loop. The idea is that, if domestic governments set the agenda, citizens can sanction them for bad performance. However, in many aid-dependent states, systems of patronage and clientelism alter the rule of the game, and mechanisms for citizens to sanction policymakers cannot be assumed to exist (Wantchekon 2003; van de Walle 2003; Kitschelt 2007). In fact, aid dependence may actually *decrease* the likelihood that citizen-sanctioning mechanisms are present, because revenue comes from donors, not from taxpayers/citizens. Consequently, governments are accountable to the donors who pay their bills not their own citizens (Moss, Pettersson, and van de Walle 2008; Moore 1998).

Foreign assistance arguably affects governance in aid-dependent states, because it changes the institutional arrangements that structure cooperation and incentives to improve governance (Bräutigam 2000). In his influential book, van de Walle (2001) argues that the aid system actually prolonged many African neopatrimonial regimes by providing a huge influx of resources and technical capacity. And, in a large-scale statistical analysis of the relationship between aid and governance, Bräutigam and Knack (2004) find that increases in aid negatively affect governance.

Ultimately, even if governments have more influence, the person controlling the purse strings does not change. Under the ownership model, revenue still comes from donors not taxpayers. Therefore, there is no reason to predict that recipient-countries will take the demands of their citizens more seriously. In fact, if the government is hostile to citizen demands, increasing their influence may allow them to take the demands of their citizens even less seriously.

2.6 Concluding Remarks

In this chapter, I outlined the contemporary debates in the literature on foreign aid. These debates have resulted in a new emphasis on recipient-country ownership, which is predicted to fix many of the longstanding challenges facing foreign assistance. In addition, I outlined the definitional contours and predictions of the ownership approach, contrasting it to the older donorship approach. While the donorship approach relies on top-down conditionalities, ownership seeks to change the institutional arrangements between donors and recipient-country governments by allowing the latter to set the agenda. I then challenged several of the assumptions implicit in the pro-ownership rhetoric.

The claim that that ownership is unrealistic has become a common refrain in some policy circles. However, such refrains are largely based on anecdotal evidence and a widespread skepticism about donors and foreign aid, not on systematic, empirical evidence. Thus far, there has been little scholarly analysis of actual attempts to change the institutional arrangements between donors and recipient countries. I provide such an analysis with this dissertation project. In the following chapter, I outline my research design in more detail, noting how I propose to test the predictions of the ownership model using three case studies of aid programs in post-genocide and civil war Rwanda.

Chapter 3
Research Design, Methodology, & Data Collection

In the previous chapter, I laid out the predictions of the ownership approach to international development, contrasting it to the older donorship approach. In summary, development practices that emphasize ownership claim to allow recipient-country governments to participate more and have more influence over the policy process, while at the same time decreasing donor influence and increasing the influence of citizens. In this dissertation, I test these predictions using case studies of aid programs in one recipient-country, Rwanda. Each of the aid programs I analyze attempts to provide more ownership to the recipient-country by changing the institutional relationship between donors and the recipient-country government, in this case the Government of Rwanda (GoR). In the following chapter, I lay out the research design and methodology I used to test the predictions of the ownership model, and how I went about collecting data.

The chapter is composed of three major sections. I first outline my independent and dependent variables and explain process tracing, the method I used to analyze my cases. Second, I make the case for looking at aid programs in Rwanda and summarize my three case studies: general budget support and poverty reduction strategies, the aid coordination, harmonization, and alignment framework, and the Rwandan Joint Governance Report. Third, I summarize my data sources and the fieldwork I conducted in Rwanda during 2009 and 2010.

3.1. Variables of Interest & Methodology

Independent variable

In this dissertation, I am interested in the effect of ownership on the influence of donors, government policymakers, and citizens of aid-dependent states. The independent variable, a change in the institutional arrangement between donors and the government, is operationalized through aid programs designed to allow the recipient country to participate more in the policy decision-making process, i.e. “ownership aid programs.”

An aid program is “a time bound intervention involving multiple activities that may cut across sectors, themes and/or geographic areas” (Denmark, Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2011). An aid *program* is different than an aid *project*, or specific “development intervention designed to achieve specific objectives within specified resources and implementation schedules” (Denmark, Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2011). However, aid projects are often implemented within the framework of an aid program. For example, donors may coalesce around an aid program on decentralization, which includes a variety of specific and distinctive aid projects that are each designed to transfer authority to local decision-makers and build local institutions.

Looking at aid programs, rather than ownership’s aggregate effect in a country, allows for more specificity. Country case studies provide an important macro-level picture (see, for example, Whitfield 2009). However, they have difficulty verifying that the outcomes they describe are actually the result of an increased focus on ownership in the recipient-country and not something else. By focusing on specific aid programs, I can better specify causal mechanisms and explore variations between program outcomes, improving the validity and specificity of my findings.

Dependent variables

The new emphasis on ownership assumes that more government participation will lead to more recipient-country government influence, and consequently, a decrease in the influence of donors and an increase in the influence of citizens over policy decision-making in aid-dependent states. However, as explained in chapter two, there are several faulty assumptions implicit in the story of ownership. Therefore, in this dissertation, I examine how ownership aid programs affect each one of the predicted outcomes of the ownership approach to international development.

First, in each case, I ask whether or not <u>the influence of the recipient-country government has increased</u> as a result of the aid program. Here I make an important distinction between participation and influence. It is not enough that governments are more *involved* in the policy process, there has to be evidence that they have more *influence* over the policy process. I look for evidence of government influence by asking questions such as: Are there instances where donors and the government disagreed? If so, who prevailed? Where donors have clear preferences, did they cede authority to recipient-country governments?

Second, I examine whether or not <u>donors have become less influential</u> over policy decision-making. Given that donor influence likely comes in several forms, I am interested in changes in both the *degree* of donor influence (i.e. how much?) and the *type* of donor influence (i.e. what kind?). In other words, I am interested in changes to not just the amount of donor influence, but changes to how donors wield their influence as well. I look for evidence of decreased donor influence by asking questions, such as: When, where, and how have donors tried to influence the policy process? When government preferences conflict with donor preferences, do donors allow the government to set the agenda?

Third, I look for evidence that citizens in the recipient-country have become more influential. Once again, it is not enough for citizens to merely participate more; there must be evidence that citizens have more influence over the policy decision-making process. I look for evidence of citizen influence by asking questions such as: Is there evidence of increased political competition? Has civil society become more active and vibrant? Is there evidence of increased accountability?

Process tracing

To move from descriptive narrative to a causal story, my analysis relies on process tracing.[16] True to its name, process tracing emphasizes processes, attempting to connect X to Y by exploring the causal link(s) between the variables of interest. Instead of testing the relationship between two variables using, for example, statistical analysis, process tracing builds a causal relationship through establishing the links and mechanisms that connect the two variables. Process tracing, therefore, leverages the data points between time A and time B to explain the relationship or lack of relationship between the variables of interest.

Process tracing is particularly advantageous because of its ability to account for complex causal relationships, such as path dependency, critical junctures, and equifinality (Bennett and Elman 2006). By tracing causal processes and mechanisms, process tracing is able to describe causal process without substantial abstraction, building theory from the ground up. This dissertation explores questions that have been hinted at, but have not been systematically theorized or analyzed. Therefore, using an approach that is more detail-oriented helps prevent heavy abstraction and the accidental omission of important variables.

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[16] For an overview of process tracing see George and Bennett 2005; Bennett 2010; Bennett and Elman 2006; Checkel 2008.

Process tracing can be used for a variety of purposes, including description, theory generation, and theory testing. In this dissertation, I use process tracing in two ways. First, I use it to test the predictions of the ownership approach. In each case, I look for evidence that connects a change in the institutional relationship between donors and the GoR with an increase in the influence of government policymakers and citizens and a decrease in the influence of donors over the policy decision-making processes.

Bennett (2010) and Collier (2011), refer to this type of causation test as a "hoop test." The hypotheses under consideration must "jump through the hoop" in order to remain under consideration. Passing the hoop test does not affirm a hypothesis; it merely suggests that the hypothesis is likely to be valid. However, failing eliminates the hypothesis. In other words, passing the hoop test is necessary for establishing causation but not sufficient.

Then, because each of the hypotheses predicted by proponents of ownership fail the hoop test, I use process tracing to provide an alternative explanation of how the aid programs actually impact the three variables of interest. In other words, I build an alternative, causal account of how the introduction of ownership aid programs in Rwanda changed (or failed to change) the influence of donors, the GoR, and Rwandan citizens over the policy decision-making process.

3.2. Case Studies

Why Rwanda?

The universe of cases for this dissertation includes all aid-dependent countries. Bräutigam defines aid dependency as "a situation in which a country cannot perform many of the core functions of government, such as operations and maintenance, or the delivery of basic public services, without foreign aid funding and expertise" (Bräutigam 2000, 2).

Countries that receive ODA equal to or greater than approximately 10% of their gross national income (GNI) are generally considered aid dependent.

If yearly figures for ODA as a percentage of GNI are averaged from 2000-2008, forty-one countries fall into this category (The average ODA as percentage of GNI across all forty-one countries is 21.44 %.). Additionally, another group of twenty-seven countries are more moderately aid dependent with averages in the 4%-9.9% range[17] (A complete list of both groups can be found in Appendix 3, pg. 185). In my dissertation, I only look at aid programs in one aid-dependent country, Rwanda. (Rwanda's average ODA as a percent of GNI from 2000-2008 is right at the median for aid dependent countries, 21.08 %.) The question is then, why Rwanda?

By an accident of history, Rwanda is a "plausibility probe." Rwanda emerged from conflict when the aid agenda was being refashioned and ownership was taking center stage. Donors championing the ownership approach (the United Kingdom, in particular) came into Rwanda following the genocide and began using Rwanda as a test case for the new approach (Hayman 2006).

The emphasis on ownership by donors has been echoed in the current regime's rhetoric. President Paul Kagame and his government are vocal supporters of the ownership approach, rarely missing an opportunity to argue for the importance of local ownership and castigate donor influence (see, for example, Handelsblatt 2009; Kagame 2007; 2009a 2009b; 2009c). As one of my interviewees put it, Rwanda is not a country that has signed on the dotted line (Interview I-VIII, 11.02.2009). In other words, Rwanda projects the non-

[17] Figures compiled from the World Bank Development Indicators.

negotiability that Whitfield (2009) says is essential for country ownership. In a recent speech to donors and senior GoR officials, Kagame argued:

> It is therefore sometimes uncalled for, that we become subjects of endless lectures of how we should manage ourselves. We know what is best for us. No one should pretend that they know better than us what we need for ourselves (Kagame 2010, 2).

Rwanda's (rhetorical) commitment to ownership is perhaps best illustrated by a lexicon change that came about during a conference in the late 1990s. Instead of being called donors, agencies providing foreign assistance to Rwanda are always referred to as "development partners" (Interview I-VI, 10.30.09).

Additionally, several contextual factors make it more likely that donors will actually be willing to give ownership to the Rwandan government. As chapter four explains in detail, Rwanda has seen tremendous economic growth over the past decade. As a result, donors are eager to attach their name to its success and support the current regime. The current government is also largely perceived as having "political will," strong leadership, and strong anti-corruption policies. In other words, Rwanda has the vision Booth (2008) says is necessary. The perception of political will and leadership, combined with tremendous economic growth, makes donors eager to back the GoR.

Lastly, a "genocide credit" likely gives the GoR more leeway to advance its agenda (Reyntjens 2004). As chapter seven explores in more detail, donors have often been willing to back the current regime, as it is largely seen as responsible for ending the 1994 genocide. Additionally, donors are sometimes fearful of challenging government policies too much, out of fear that conflict may once again erupt. As one of my interviewees noted, the role or absence of the international community in 1994 is always in the background; the GoR is always thinking about it. The international community is not in a weak position, as it gives lots of money, but in an ambiguous one (Interview I-XVIII, 01.13.09).

Collectively, the proactive nature of the GoR and the increased likelihood that donors will actually grant ownership means that if a change from donorship to ownership is feasible, it should be feasible in Rwanda. If we do not see ownership emerging in Rwanda, it is unlikely we will see it emerging elsewhere. Therefore, although it is not representative of all aid-dependent countries, the country offers an excellent place to begin analyzing the impact of ownership in aid-dependent countries.

Summary of case studies

Within the Rwandan context, I examine four "ownership" aid programs – poverty reduction strategies, budget support, the joint governance assessment, and the Aid Coordination, Harmonization, and Alignment Agenda – through three case studies. Poverty reduction strategies and budget support are distinct aid programs; participation in one does not mean participation in another. However, they are tightly linked and both have similar objectives. Therefore, for the purposes of this dissertation, they constitute one case study in this dissertation project.

Each aid program is designed to change the institutional relationship between donors and the recipient-country government, giving more influence to the GoR. What differs is what the GoR, as a result of the aid program, is supposed to have more influence over. Poverty reduction strategies and budget support are supposed to give the GoR more influence over the design and implementation of development policy. Alternatively, the Aid Coordination, Harmonization, and Alignment agenda supposedly gives the government more influence over the aid policy donors pursue in Rwanda. Lastly, the Joint Governance

Advisory Report is supposed to give the GoR more influence over governance policy (see table 3.1).

Table 3.1: Predictions of Case Studies

Budget Support & Poverty Reduction Strategies: Changes in influence over *development policy*
Joint Governance Report: Changes in influence over *governance policy*
Aid Coordination, Harmonization, and Alignment: Changes in influence over *aid policy*

Below, I briefly summarize each case study and explain why each is an "ownership" aid program. More specifics about each case can be found in the case study chapters (chapters five, six, and seven).

Rwanda's poverty reduction strategy and budget support

Poverty reduction strategies began as a part of the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) program, a World Bank and IMF program that grants debt relief to low-income countries. In 1999, the HIPC program began to require that participating countries lay out their own medium-term development goals and strategies in a poverty reduction strategy paper or PRSP (IMF 2010).[18] As of early 2011, seventy low-income states either had a PRSP or an interim PRSP, and many states are currently working on their second or third PRSP.[19] Rwanda jumped on the poverty reduction strategy bandwagon quite early, finalizing its first

[18] Other criteria for participation include (1) be eligible to borrow from IDA, (2) face an unsustainable debt burden that cannot be addressed through traditional debt relief mechanisms, and 3) have established a track record of reform and sound policies through the IMF and World Bank (IMF 2010). The PRSP program was officially approved by the Joint Boards of the IMF and World Bank in December 1999 (Cheru 2006).

[19] New PRSPs are generally prepared every three to five years. For a full list of all countries with a PRSP or interim PRSP see http://go.worldbank.org/LYE7YNYBH0.

PRSP in June 2002 and finalizing a second, the "Economic Development & Poverty Reduction Strategy 2008-2012" (EDPRS), in 2007.

Poverty reduction strategies are said to represent an ownership approach, because they ask countries to outline their own plans for development. As Cheru notes, "The PRSP approach is supposed to represent a major departure from previous development strategies whereby the World Bank and the IMF dictated the directions of economic policies in poor countries" (Cheru 2006, 355). That is, instead of making aid conditional on World Bank and IMF thinking, poverty reduction strategies are supposed to give authority to recipient-country governments.

Following the introduction of the poverty reduction strategy program, donors began issuing a new type of "program aid," or aid that is not tied to a particular project.[20] Budget support is a resource transfer directly into the budget or treasury of the receiving country and allows the recipient country to use its own allocation, procurement, and accounting structures. The idea is that countries define their own priorities through the PRSP process, and then budget support funds these priorities. Collectively, budget support and the poverty reduction strategy program are supposed to give recipient-countries control over development policy and the allocation of aid money. Because it supposedly gives recipient-countries the ability to spend aid money as they wish, budget support is often heralded as the prime example of the ownership approach.

Rwanda's Aid Coordination, Harmonization, and Alignment Agenda

The Aid Coordination, Harmonization, and Alignment agenda (ACHA) is an attempt by the GoR and donors to localize the Paris Declaration in Rwanda by providing higher

[20] Alternative types of program aid include, balance of payment support and debt relief (Hammond 2006).

levels of ownership through increased coordination, harmonization, and alignment. Ownership is at the core of the Paris Agenda outlined in chapter two. However, additional elements, such as coordination, alignment, and harmonization, provide the foundation for ownership. If donors do not harmonize and align their activities with national systems and priorities, it would be difficult for a recipient-country to take charge of development and aid policy. At the same time, if donors remain fragmented, advancing one agenda led by the recipient-country would be difficult.

In contrast to the poverty reduction strategy program and budget support, which are global programs, ACHA is a Rwandan aid program. However, several other countries have similar coordination, harmonization, and alignment mechanisms (for example, the Joint Assistance Strategy in Zambia or the Joint Assistance Strategy for Tanzania). ACHA brings donors and the GoR together in a series of forums and working groups that are designed to make sure donors and the GoR are on the same page and allow donors to support GoR programs more effectively. For example, under the ACHA framework, high-level donor representatives and GoR officials meet in a series of quarterly meetings, as well as a bi-annual Development Partners Meeting and an annual Development Partners Forum. Additionally, under the ACHA framework, the Rwandan cabinet approved an Aid Policy in 2006.

The Rwandan Joint Governance Assessment

In contrast to the other case studies, the Joint Governance Assessment or JGA is completely unique to Rwanda. The JGA is a “jointly owned” set of indicators that assess governance in Rwanda and is arguably the first of its kind globally. The idea for the JGA came about in 2006, and the first report was approved by Rwanda’s cabinet on September 12, 2008 and adopted at the Development Partner's Meeting in November 2008. The JGA covers three broad areas of assessment: ruling justly, government effectiveness, and investment climate and corporate governance (RGAC 2009; Williams et al. 2009). The JGA process is supposed to result in an annual report. However, only one official report has been released thus far.

The central objective of the JGA is to produce a single governance assessment that donors and the GoR can both utilize. The JGA is a particularly interesting aid program, because it deals with governance, a highly politically sensitive topic for the GoR. Additionally, while the GoR and donors appear to see eye to eye about economic policy, they have often butted heads when it comes to governance. These differences distinguish the JGA from the other two aid programs analyzed in this dissertation.

Representativeness

My research design is based on case studies from a single country. While the design allows me to make fairly conclusive claims about the impact of the ownership approach in Rwanda, its ability to make claims about the impact of the ownership approach globally is limited. Therefore, the conclusions outlined in chapter eight will need to be corroborated in other contexts to ensure their generalizability.

Two factors in particular make Rwanda a unique case, and may influence the generalizability of my findings. First, the leadership provided by President Paul Kagame is perhaps unique. As chapter four will explain with more depth, Kagame is not without his critics (particularly in the human rights world). However, Kagame has found a voice with many Western leaders and enjoys substantial support from powerful states like the United States and the United Kingdom, whom he has courted extensively. Kagame's support from the United States and United Kingdom is important to keep in mind, as it is likely to influence the relationships between donors and the GoR. Second, the 1994 Rwandan genocide provides a very particular country context. Although there has been no systematic analysis of how the genocide affects aid disbursement in Rwanda, donors and scholars often note a sense of guilt amongst donors that likely affects the relationship between donors and the GoR.[21]

Both factors are likely to make Rwanda a unique context, particularly the 1994 genocide. Kagame has at times been linked with the "new generation of African leaders," a group of African presidents that were highly regarded during the 1990s (many have since fallen out of favor).[22] As such, his leadership is not a completely unique phenomenon. However, the Rwandan genocide was a particularly important world event. Its dramatic impact on present day Rwanda cannot, and should not, be ignored. I did not "control" for these factors. However, throughout my research, I was very attentive to how the unique features of the Rwandan case might influence my findings and conclusions. I will discuss how generalizable my findings are in chapter eight.

3.3. Data Sources

I obtained data for this dissertation from three main sources: (1) in-country fieldwork, (2) primary documents, and (3) supplemental evaluations and reports. It was often the case that it would be in the best interest of the actors I analyzed to focus on successes rather than limitations. Therefore, I avoided relying on a single data source.

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[21] For example, Reyntjens (2004) speaks of a genocide credit that he argues lets the Kagame regime get away with very serious human rights violations.

[22] Leaders often included in this group (along with Kagame) include Yoweri Museveni of Uganda, Meles Zenawi of Ethiopia, Isaias Afewerki of Eritrea, Jerry Rawlings of Ghana, Joaquim Chissano of Mozambique, and Thabo Mbeki of South Africa.

Fieldwork

I conducted approximately three months of in-country fieldwork in Rwanda during October/November 2009 and June/July 2010. This fieldwork consisted of interviews with Rwandan government officials, international development staff from bilateral and multilateral donor agencies, NGOs, and independent consultants, as well as observations of pertinent meetings and conferences. In addition, throughout my time in Rwanda, I was introduced to and participated in informal conversations with countless individuals relevant to my subject of study. Although these conversations are not directly reflected in my data sources, they often alerted me to key aspects of the Rwandan case.

I conducted 47 formal interviews with 48 people.[23] A list of interviews can be found in Appendix 1. Interviews lasted anywhere from thirty minutes to more than three hours, with the average being around an hour. I chose not to have a standard interview protocol for my interviews. The information I desired from each interviewee was different, and I wanted to have the flexibility to explore interesting topics that might arise spontaneously. Having a rigid interview protocol would have prevented this type of flexibility. Therefore, before each interview I established what I hoped to obtain from the conversation and outlined important questions to ask that particular interviewee. However, I gave myself the flexibility to explore topics that came up unexpectedly. I made sure to avoid leading questions, instead asking the interviewee to describe their experiences or provide their opinion about pertinent topics.

The questions I asked varied based on several factors. First, I asked different questions depending on whether the interviewee worked for a donor or the GoR. Several of

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[23] In some cases, interviews were with conducted with more than one person. In addition, I conducted more than one interview with some individuals. All of these interviews took place in person in Kigali, save for one, which was conducted via Skype.

my interviewees who were Rwandan nationals had actually worked for both the GoR and one or more donor. This led to many interesting conversations comparing the two experiences. Second, I asked different questions depending on the interviewee's job title/description. For example, when interviewing donors it mattered whether the interviewee was the head of the delegation or in charge of a specific aspect of the agency's country program. When interviewing government representatives it mattered if the interviewee was the head of a division or a lower ranking civil servant. Third, I asked different questions depending on the interviewee's past experience and work on specific programs or aid projects.

Selecting whom to interview was not particularly difficult. Most donors, even the largest agencies, have a relatively small staff on the ground in Rwanda and access was not typically an issue. Each donor agency is arranged differently. However, in most agencies I spoke to the donor representative working on governance/democratization and the donor representative in charge of aid coordination (typically an economist). In the end, I was able to speak with representatives of all the major donors. Government officials were slightly less easy to identify, because there were more of them and sometimes access was more difficult. That being said, I was able to speak with almost all persons that I identified as a key informant, and I was pleasantly surprised at my ability to access high-level elites. The greatest challenge I faced was that key informants on a particular subject were sometimes no longer in Kigali.

Given that Rwanda is a relatively closed society, frankness was always a concern. I was particularly concerned about the ability of government employees to speak openly. Most of my conversations did not center on highly politically sensitive topics (i.e. human rights, repression, ethnic relationships). However, the topic of governance, broadly defined, can be a delicate subject in Rwanda. Therefore, throughout my analysis I always kept in mind that my informants might not have been at liberty to be completely forthcoming.

Due to concerns about openness, I opted not to tape record my interviews. Instead, I took detailed notes during the interview and then spent anywhere from one to two hours writing up the interview immediately after it was completed. Because I did not tape record, my dissertation includes very few direct quotes by interviewees. While direct quotes would have been an asset, I felt it was more important to establish a neutral space for my interviewees than be able to quote them directly.

In addition to interviews, I was also able to attend and observe a few key meetings between donors and the GoR, including a biannual Joint Budget Support Review, a Workshop on the Joint Governance Assessment, and a Policy Dialogue on the Mo Ibrahim Foundation Index. During these meetings, I was able to directly observe how donor representatives and government policymakers interacted. This experience was invaluable to my research, and enabled a deeper understanding of the current relationships between the GoR and its development partners. Attending these meetings also allowed me to speak to many more individuals than those I formally interviewed, and allowed me to observe informal exchanges between development partners and government officials.

Primary documents

To supplement fieldwork, I also collected and analyzed primary documents about development in Rwanda and the aid programs I analyzed. A list of documents consulted can be found in Appendix 2. Primary sources mainly came in the form of: (1) key aid documents and declarations by the GoR and its donors; (2) meeting agendas, power point presentations, and minutes; and (3) documents specific to the identified program of interest. An online library on the Development Partners website (http://www.devpartners.gov.rw) provided a wealth of information to analyze. In addition, I acquired more documents during my time in Rwanda, as interviewees gave me documents, sometimes without me requesting them. I also worked with staff at the External Finance Unit at the Ministry of Finance to obtain missing documents.

Monitoring and evaluation reports and academic sources

I also consulted several monitoring and evaluation (M&E) reports on matters related to aid in Rwanda. At times, I relied on evaluations and reports to verify my findings and, in some cases, they provided powerful confirmation of my conclusions. However, I never used them as the sole confirmation of a finding, because I have no way of verifying the accuracy of their conclusions. Additionally, such reports are often critiqued for relying on a fly-in and fly-out method in which highly paid consultants touchdown in Kigali for a day or two. I paid close attention to the project descriptions to avoid particularly careless work. However, the time spent on the report was still typically an unknown. Lastly, while these reports were usually conducted by independent consultants, the scope and conditions of the project (and sometimes the findings) often must be signed-off by the sponsoring donor(s) and the GoR. Therefore, it is difficult to know how "independent" the reports actually are.

I also consulted the work of several academics who conducted extensive research in Rwanda, including Peter Uvin, Filip Reyntjens, Gérard Prunier, and René Lemarchand. While my case studies are largely based on my own data, I referred to works by these and other authors to gain a fuller understanding of the Rwandan context and the history of donor engagement in the country. In particular, I found Rachel Hayman's thorough and meticulous work on aid to Rwanda in the post-genocide period informative and helpful (Hayman 2006, 2009a, 2009b).

3.4. Concluding Remarks

In this chapter, I outlined my research design, which is based on my analysis of four different aid programs implemented in the early 2000s in Rwanda. Each of these aid programs promises an increase in recipient-country ownership. I use a process-tracing method and rely on data collected during fieldwork in Rwanda, as well as primary sources and external evaluations to make my conclusions. In each case study, I ask whether or not we see: (1) an increase in recipient-country influence, (2) a decrease in donor influence, or (3) an increase in citizen influence.

My goal is to develop middle-range theory on how global norms around aid disbursement influence decision-making and policy choice in local contexts. As George and Bennett note:

> High general theories that attempt to formulate broad covering laws tend to have quite limited explanatory and predictive power…They are pitched at a level of abstraction that fails to give insightful explanation of foreign policy decision or of interactions between states that lead to specific outcomes. Middle-range theories, on the other hand, are deliberately limited in their scope; they attempt to explain different subclasses of general phenomena. *Middle-range theory attempt to formulate well-specified conditional generalizations of more limited scope* (George and Bennett 2005, 266: my emphasis).

Given that the purpose of my research is to generate theory that makes conditional generalizations about a particular group of countries, the generation of middle-range theory is appropriate for my purposes. Furthermore, middle-range theory is easier to translate into policy relevant conclusions than high-level general theories, which provide little for policymakers to go on (George and Bennett 2005). The ability to make policy-relevant conclusions is essential when analyzing a subject area such as foreign aid that is clearly pertinent to a wide array of policymakers.

Chapter 4
Donors and Development

...in the heart of the African continent, lie the highlands of Rwanda. The country is tiny, the size of Massachusetts, and has one of the highest population densities in the world. This is not the Africa of jungles, corruption, and failed states portrayed in movies. Temperatures fall to freezing on some hill tops, cattle graze on velvety pastures, and the government maintains a tight grip on all aspects of society. On the thousand of hills – in between tea plantations and eucalyptus groves – millions of peasants eke out a living by farming beans, bananas, and sorghum.

-Jason Sterns, *Dancing in the Glory of Monsters* (2011, 13)

In the following chapter, I outline the Rwandan context, describing the history of development in Rwanda and the activities of bilateral and multilateral donors currently active in in the country. The purpose of this chapter is twofold. First, in order to understand contemporary development schemes and practices, it is important for the reader to have a basic understanding of the Rwandan context. Second, both the country context and the country's donors are likely to affect how the ownership approach plays out in a particular country. Whoever benefits from ownership is apt to be dependent on the existing power dynamics in the recipient county. If a particular group of domestic actors have little authority in a given country context, there is little reason to believe that ownership aid programs will drastically change how much influence they wield. Likewise, if a donor does not prioritize ownership, we are not likely to see a great deal of change in how they do business, even if there is a growing emphasis on ownership in Rwanda as a whole.

The chapter is organized into three sections. In the first two sections, I provide a brief overview of development in Rwanda. I divide this discussion into two time periods: independence the genocide (1962-1994) and post-genocide to the present day (1994-2010). The

1994 genocide is clearly a major turning point in Rwandan history; it changed development practices and ushered in a new set of donors. I, therefore, use it to structure my discussion.

I then discuss the roles and strategies of the major multilateral and bilateral donors currently active in Rwanda. While several donors are increasing their presence in Rwanda, I focus on the donors currently providing the highest levels of ODA to Rwanda: the World Bank, African Development Bank, European Commission, United Kingdom, and United States. I also briefly discuss the United Nations. My discussion of Rwanda's donors highlights differences in the practices and priorities of the multiple donors currently providing aid to Rwanda. These differences not only make coordination and harmonization difficult, they impact the types of aid programs a donor pursues and the commitment to ownership a donor expresses.

4.1. The Pre-Genocide Period, 1962-1994

The boundaries of modern day Rwanda were established in 1962 when the state declared its independence from Belgium and separated from what is now the independent state of Burundi.[24] In the section below, I provide a very brief summary of more than 40 years of development in Rwanda, from independence to the 1994 genocide. I also briefly summarize ethnic divisions between the Tutsi and Hutu populations. Tensions between the two groups are not only fundamental to understanding the civil war and genocide of the 1990s, but contemporary politics and development practices in Rwanda as well.

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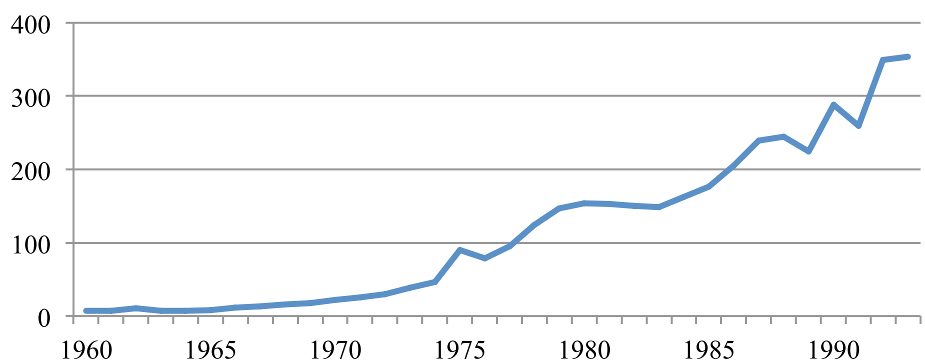
[24] What we now know as two separate countries, Rwanda and Burundi, were at one time the colonial territory known as Ruanda-Urundi. Ruanda-Urundi was first assigned to Germany by the 1884 Berlin Conference but was allocated to Belgium by a League of Nations mandate after World War I.

Development and the influx of ODA

Following independence, there was a gradual but steady increase in the amount of foreign aid flowing into Rwanda (see figure 4.1). In 1960, ODA to Rwanda was calculated at $7.5 million. By the early 1990s, Rwanda's ODA was over $300 million. Growth in ODA was particularly strong in the 1970s. In this decade alone, aid increased more than seven-fold, from around $22 million at the start of the decade, to over $154 million at the end of the decade. In the 1980s, ODA once again doubled, exceeding $287 million by 1990. This means that in 1990 alone, donors spent $41 for each of Rwanda's seven million citizens.[25]

Figure 4.1: ODA to Rwanda, 1960-1994 (current USD million)



Source: World Development Indicators

Did this all this aid do any good? Poverty has always been a problem in Rwanda. In 1984-1985, 63.33% of the population lived in households with consumption or income per person below the poverty line ($1.25 a day).[26] Like most underdeveloped countries, Rwanda has historically faced high-levels of debt, population growth, and pressure on the environment. Historically, most Rwandans have engaged in subsistence agriculture, with the primary exports

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[25] It is estimated that around 200 bilaterials, multilaterals, and NGOs managed more than 500 aid projects in Rwanda by 1986 (Hansson 1989, cited in Uvin 1998). This is an exceptionally large presence considering Rwanda has a population akin to Virginia and is geographically the size of Maryland.

[26] Source: PovcalNet. Available at http://iresearch.worldbank.org/PovcalNet/jsp/index.jsp

being coffee and tea. This has placed a great deal of strain on the land and economy, as Rwanda has the highest population density in continental Sub-Saharan Africa (Bureau of African Affairs 2011).

Despite these challenges, economic development in Rwanda was generally upwards (although slow) in the decades following independence (see Table 4.1).

Table 4.1: Rwandan Economic Development Indictors

Indicator	***Period***	***Growth Rate (%)***
GNP per capita	1965-88	+1.5
Industrial Growth	1980-88	+3.6
Services Growth	1980-88	+3.4
Agricultural Growth	1980-88	+.3
Energy Production	1980-88	+5.5
Gross Domestic Investment	1980-88	+7.4
Annual exports	1960-80	+7.8

Source: Data compiled by Uvin (1998, 47)

Rwanda's economic growth during this time period is particularly impressive when you compare it to economic growth (or lack of growth) in Rwanda's East African neighbors. While Rwanda's neighbors saw their ranking among other least developed countries (LDCs) decrease, Rwanda's ranking increased (see table 4.2).

Table 4.2: Rwanda's LDC Ranking Compared to East African Neighbors

Country ranking among LDCs from bottom up

	Rwanda	Burundi	Zaïre	Uganda	Tanzania
1976	7	11	16	33	25
1981	16	14	12	13	19
1985	18	11	9	N/A	21
1990	19	11	12	13	2
Variation	+12	-	-4	-20	-23

Source: World Bank Development Reports, compiled by Reyntjens (1994, 35)

During the 70s and 80s, Rwanda stood out among other states in Africa and became a model for African development. The small but upwards economic trends in Rwanda, combined with a belief that Rwanda possessed political stability, effective administration, and prudent and sound management, made the country very attractive to foreign donors (Uvin 1998). However, the high rate of foreign assistance would have lasting effects.

From 1982-1987, foreign assistance financed over 70% of public investment (World Bank 1989: 11), allowing the state to import much more than it exported (see Uvin 1998, 42-43). Beginning in the 1980s, the system began to show signs of fatigue. In the mid-1980s, an agricultural crisis hit Rwanda. Food production dropped sharply and the prices of tea and coffee, Rwanda's major cash crops, dropped dramatically on the world market. As a result, the country spiraled into financial crisis. Foreign debt, which had previously been relatively low by regional standards, increased rapidly from 16% of GNP in 1980 to 32% of GNP in 1990 (Uvin 1998).

The financial crisis was exacerbated by drought (1984), excessive rain (1987), plant disease (1998), and, of course, the civil war that began in the 1990s. However, the major causes of the crisis were structural. Rwanda's dependence on coffee made the country vulnerable to international price swings, and its industrial sector was mismanaged and expensive. Additionally, since the 1980s the state had faced a balance-of-payment deficit and had been increasingly dependent on foreign aid. Although the country did achieve a positive balance of payments and public sector budget in 1984-1985, the collapse in the mining sector and the worldwide decline in coffee prices brought about a crisis that the government was unable to manage (Uvin 1998).

These fiscal challenges resulted in a $90 million structural adjustment program (SAP) with the World Bank in 1991, and additional SAPs in 1992 and 1993. The latter were only partially implemented. The SAPs called on the state to devalue the Rwandese franc in order to boost coffee exports (leading to inflation), reduce imports, and cut expenditures. There is little consensus on the impact of the SAPs, because they were never fully realized due to the civil war and 1994 genocide, which spiraled the country into economic and social turmoil. In the following section, I provide a brief overview of the ethnic tensions that, in combination with economic challenges, fostered the civil war and 1994 genocide.

The "ethnicity" question

Historically, three groups of people have co-existed in Rwanda, the Hutu, Tutsi, and Twa. While ethnic identification is now forbidden, Hutus are believed to make up approximately 84% of the population, Tutsis 15% and the Twa 1% (CIA n.d.). All three groups speak the same Bantu language (Kinyarwanda) and have lived side-by-side and intermarried for centuries. Therefore, it is inappropriate to call these groups "tribes." However, there are stereotypically physical features associated with each group.[27]

Ethnic divisions have been a part of Rwandan society for centuries. However, their meaning and political significance has always been intertwined with class and power and have varied over time and between regions (Newbury 1988; 1998). During the Belgian colonial state, ethnic divisions became more entrenched and ethnicity became less fluid.[28] The Belgian colonial state required all Rwandan citizens to carry identity cards, on which their ethnicity was listed.

During the colonial state, Tutsis were to elevated to positions of power, while Hutus were systematically removed from positions of power and excluded from higher education. This stifled Hutu advancement for generations (Des Forges 1999). Tutsis gained increased authority based on a combination of factors, including administrative efficiency, kinship institutions, and

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[27] The Bwatwa or Twa people are pygmoids who historically were hunters and gatherers in forested areas or completed menial tasks for high-raking persons. Hutus are thought to have a more standard Bantu physical appearance, resembling the populations of neighboring Uganda. On the other hand, Tutsi are thought to be very tall and thin with sharp, angular facial features. While Hutus were historically pastoralists, Tutsis were associated with wealth and power largely due to their ownership of cattle (Prunier 1995).

[28] Prior to a census in the 1930s, ethnicity was relatively fluid. E.g., if a Rwandan acquired a great deal of cattle, they might "become" a Tutsi. However, in the 1930s, all Rwandan adults were required to declare an ethnicity. This ethnicity was then entered into the public record and indicated on mandatory identification cards. This made one's ethnicity more difficult - although not impossible - to change (Des Forges 1999).

racist theories of evolution. The latter argued that Tutsis were a Hamatic race (i.e., the Tutsis were descendants of Noah's son Ham) and, therefore, superior to the Hutu population, which was argue to be related to the "Negorid" population of Sub-Saharan Africa (Prunier 1995).

Through the colonial experience, the cleavages between Hutus and Tutsis grew more pronounced and salient. In the 1950s, there were several clashes between the Tutsi minority and the Hutu majority, and cleavages between the two groups continued to grow. After independence, Hutus came to power, led first by Grégoire Kayibanda (1962-1973) and then Juvenal Habyarimana (1973-1994). Over the following decades, ethnic tensions between the two groups flared at multiple points, resulting in forced migration and death for many Tutsis. By 1964, approximately 336,000 Tutsis were living in exile in neighboring states. Between December 1963 and January 1964 alone, an estimated 10,000 Tutsis were killed (Prunier 1995).

The question of ethnicity is exceedingly complex and difficult, and there are multiple "contested histories" in Rwanda (Newbury 1998). What is most important to keep in mind is that divisions between Hutus and Tutsis are not primordial. Although ethnicity is clearly a salient cleavage in Rwanda, its importance is deeply tied to issues of power and class. As Uvin writes, ethnicity in Rwanda is "not a matter of 'objective' cultural or physical distinctions but rather is a social construct, an 'imagined community'" (Anderson 1983; Uvin 1998: 15).[29]

Civil war and genocide

In the 1990s, the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF), a force largely composed of Tutsi refugees living in neighboring Uganda, invaded Rwanda from the north. Their advancement began a civil war and reignited ethnic fears. Far from being an unorganized and inexperienced

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[29] For a more details on ethnicity in Rwanda, the reader is encouraged to see works by Gérard Prunier (1995), Scott Straus (2006), Alison Des Forges (1999), René Lemarchand (2009), and Lee Ann Fujii (2009).

militia, the RPF contained experienced military personnel due to the training many members received in the Ugandan Army.[30] The RPF was originally commanded by General Fred Twigema, but, when Twigema was killed (allegedly by friendly fire), Major Paul Kagame returned from military training in Fort Leavenworth, Kansas (USA) to take command. Under Kagame's leadership, the RPF advanced relatively quickly against the government forces, the Forces Armées Rwandaises (FAR) (Prunier 1995). Approximately 9,000 soldiers and civilians were killed as a result of the civil war (Lacina and Gleditsch 2005).

In 1993, a peace agreement between the Hutu-led government and the Tutsi-led RPF was negotiated in Arusha, Tanzania. The so-called Arusha Peace Accords resulted in a cease-fire and the implementation of a transitional government. Additionally, a UN peacekeeping mission (UNAMIR) was dispatched to the region. However, the tides changed once again when, on April 6, 1994, a plane crashed over Kigali Airport, killing the current (Hutu) Rwandan president, Juvenal Habyarimana, and his Burundian counterpart. Who is responsible for the attack is still unknown, although many blame the RPF.[31]

Based on these speculations, within hours, what is now known as the Rwandan genocide began. In approximately 100 days an estimated 800,000 Rwandans (mostly Tutsi and moderate Hutus) were killed.[32] The Rwandan army and militarized gangs and small local militias known as the *Interahamwe* were largely responsible for the killings (Mamdani 2002; Straus 2006). The

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[30] Many members of the Rwandan Patriotic Front gained wartime experience through participating in the Uganda Bush War, which brought the currently Ugandan President, Yoweri Museveni, to power in 1986.

[31] In 2006, French judge Jean Louis Bruguiere issued arrest warrants for nine senior RPF officials, including President Kagame, on charges that they were responsible for downing Habyarimana's plane. The indictment led to the arrest of a senior aide to Kagame, Rose Kabuye, in Germany in 2008. The charges were vehemently denied by Kagame and were eventually dropped in December 2010 after a leaked US cable suggested they were politically motivated (Kanuma 2010).

[32] This figure represents a median consensus that has developed in the literature on the Rwandan genocide. Some reports cite the total number of deaths as low as 500,000 and others as high as 1.2 million.

genocide (and civil war) officially ended on July 4th, 1994 when the RPF, led by General Paul Kagame, took Rwanda's capital city, Kigali.

Western Involvement

How much did Western states and aid agencies know about the possibility of genocide in Rwanda? This too is a very difficult question (both because the facts are somewhat muddy and the political implications are large). However, there is significant evidence that Western actors knew that genocide was likely but chose to ignore the warning signs. By most accounts, it was clear that the human rights situation in Rwanda was rapidly deteriorating in the early 1990s. In 1993, two international commissions (one from the UN and the other from a collection of human rights organizations) warned of a possible genocide (Power 2001).

Some donors responded to alleged human rights violations by limiting foreign aid.[33] However, overall, most donors did not make significant changes to their activities in Rwanda. Although Germany and Belgium threatened to cut aid on human rights grounds, they never did (Reyntjens 1994: 194). Uvin writes, "The aid community largely continued business as usual, as if oblivious to the challenges facing Rwandese society" (1998: 86).

Warnings of an impending crisis intensified in early 1994. The so-called "Dallaire fax" was sent on January 4, 1994, some three months before the genocide began. In this correspondence, Romeo Dallaire, commander of UNAMIR, reported to UN headquarters that a reliable informant claimed, "he has been ordered to register all Tutsi in Kigali. He suspects it is for their extermination. The example he gave was that in twenty minutes his personnel could kill

[33] For example, the Swiss Development Cooperation shifted its aid commitments from three to five years to annual distribution. In 1992, the United States cut aid, and, in 1993, it channeled aid primarily through NGOs and the World Food Programme (Uvin 1998).

up to 1000 Tutsis."[34] Dallaire was prepared to act on this information by raiding arms caches identified by the informant but was forbidden to do so by the then head of UN Peacekeeping, Kofi Annan. (Annan would later become UN Secretary-General.) Instead, Dallaire was instructed to inform President Habyarimana, whose government was later directly implicated in the genocide, of the informant's claims (Power 2001).[35]

Even once the genocide was underway, the international community did little to stop the atrocities. Most donor agencies evacuated their foreign staff, leaving not only the population at-large but also their own local staff to perish. During the three days in which approximately 4,000 foreigners were evacuated, approximately 20,000 Rwandans were killed. As Des Forges (1999) points out, western leaders (often due to very little knowledge of the context) had difficultly separating out the civil war violence from the genocidal acts being committed. Their focus was on rescuing the now defunct Arusha Peace Accord instead of stopping the atrocities. Stepping up the military intervention would have likely had a large impact. However, instead, UNAMIR lost its best troops during the height of the killings when Belgium withdrew its forces from Rwanda on April 19th, 1994 (Power 2001).

Enabling and fostering genocide?

While the lack of international intervention in 1993 and 1994 is by now relatively well-known, the role Western actors played in enabling and/or fostering the genocide is discussed far less. In particular, France has faced intense criticism for its support of Juvénal Habyarimana's regime. Located at the border between Francophone and Anglophone Africa, Rwanda is strategically important for France, and the Habyarimana regime was closely tied to France and

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[34] A full copy of the fax can been seen at http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/evil/warning/cable.html.
[35] For a full account of the UN response, or lack of response to the genocide, see Dallaire's memoir (2005) and Barnett (2002).

its former president, François Mitterrand. There is little doubt that French support extended Habyarimana's presidency (Kroslak 2007; McNulty 2000).

Throughout the conflict between the Habyarimana government and the RPF, France supplied arms and military training to the Presidential Guard; the same guard that eventually trained the genocidal *Interahamwe* militias (McNulty 2000, 1997). Just two years before the genocide, the French government financed a $6 million arms deal between the Egyptian Government and the Rwandan government.[36] In addition to financial support, there are allegations that French paratroopers directly participated in the war against the RPF by manning artillery positions and arresting Tutsis for the Rwandan army. While the French government denies these allegations, there is a decent amount of evidence to support them (Melvern 2000). To this day, France denies any responsibly for the genocide (Kroslak 2007) and tensions remain strained between the Anglophone leaning RPF and Paris.[37]

In *Aiding Violence*, Peter Uvin extends the blame beyond France, arguing that the "development enterprise" fostered the conditions that led to the 1994 genocide. Uvin argues that development cannot be seen as distinct from Rwandan domestic socioeconomic and political processes, as development always interacts with processes of elite reproduction, social differentiation, political exclusion, and culture change. Uvin argues that development in Rwanda exacerbated conditions of social exclusion and underlying tensions among Hutus and Tutsis. Consequently, the development enterprise is not only guilty of failing to prevent and stop the

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[36] Boutros Boutros-Gahli, who was then the Egyptian Minister of State for Foreign Affairs but became UN Secretary General shortly thereafter, oversaw the arms deal.

[37] In 2008, a Rwandan commission produced a report (commonly called the "Mucyo Report") on French involvement in the genocide. The 500-page report cites evidence that France helped train the ethnic Hutu militia perpetrators and accuses French troops of being direct involved in the killings. It also names thirty-three senior French military and political figures (including the former President, Francois Mitterrand, and Prime Minister, Edouard Balladur) that the commission argues should be prosecuted. France has denounced the report (BBC News 2008).

genocide, but also of exacerbating the conditions that led to genocide in the first place (Uvin 1998).

4.2. The Post-Genocide Period, 1994 to the Present

In present day Rwanda, post-genocide development and reconstruction is generally divided into three periods: the emergency aid period (1995-1997), the transition period (1998-2001), and the sustainable development period (2002-present).[38] Although these distinctions are somewhat artificial, they do reflect the changing nature of development and aid in Rwanda. The period after the genocide was characterized by huge amounts of humanitarian aid. In the late 1990s, attention shifted towards building state-capacity and institutions. In 2003, the constitution went into effect and the first post-genocide elections took place.

In the following section, I provide an overview of development and governance in post-genocide Rwanda. The current Rwandan leadership has often attempted to link Rwanda's economic development to that of the so-called "Asian Tigers;" whose approach to economic development is characterized by interventionist policies combined with strong limits on political freedom. The result has been a fairly impressive track record of economic growth since the genocide. However, in recent years, criticism of the GoR and its policies has increased. Some suggest that Rwanda is taking the South Korean or Taiwanese model (in which democratization comes only after sustained economic growth), while others argue that Singapore is a more apt model (Longman 2011).[39]

[38] According to one of my interviewees, the government called a meeting in 1998 (which she was present at) and said now the emergency phase is over. Now we are in the "development stage" (Interview I-XVI, 11.10.09).
[39] Rwanda is also sometimes linked to Singapore, because of its tough stance on corruption (Zorbas 2011)

Development and foreign assistance

Rwanda has developed at impressive rates since the genocide (see table 4.3). GNP growth has averaged at over 6%. In 2008, GNP was \$4.46 USD billion (up more than \$3 billion since in its lowest point in 1994) and the growth rate was an outstanding 11.23%.[40] In 2005, Rwanda reached the completion point under the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries program (HIPC), entitling them to debt relief of \$1.4 billion in nominal terms (IMF 2005).[41] In 2009, the World Bank labeled Rwanda the "top global reformer" in its "Doing Business" report (2009).

Table 4.3: Economic Indicators for Rwanda, 1994-2008

	GDP (Current US$ billion)	GDP growth (Annual %)	GNI per capita, Atlas (Current US$)	Aid as % of National Budget
1994	0.75	-50.25	160	94.41%
1995	1.29	35.22	230	53.71%
1996	1.38	12.75	240	33.66%
1997	1.85	13.85	270	12.40%
1998	1.99	8.86	270	17.60%
1999	1.93	7.58	270	19.32%
2000	1.74	8.10	250	18.53%
2001	1.67	8.50	230	18.19%
2002	1.64	11.00	210	21.83%
2003	1.78	0.30	200	18.85%
2004	1.97	5.30	220	24.84%
2005	2.38	7.10	250	24.32%
2006	2.83	7.29	290	20.67%
2007	3.41	7.94	330	20.89%
2008	4.46	11.23	410	N/A

Source: World Bank Development Indicators

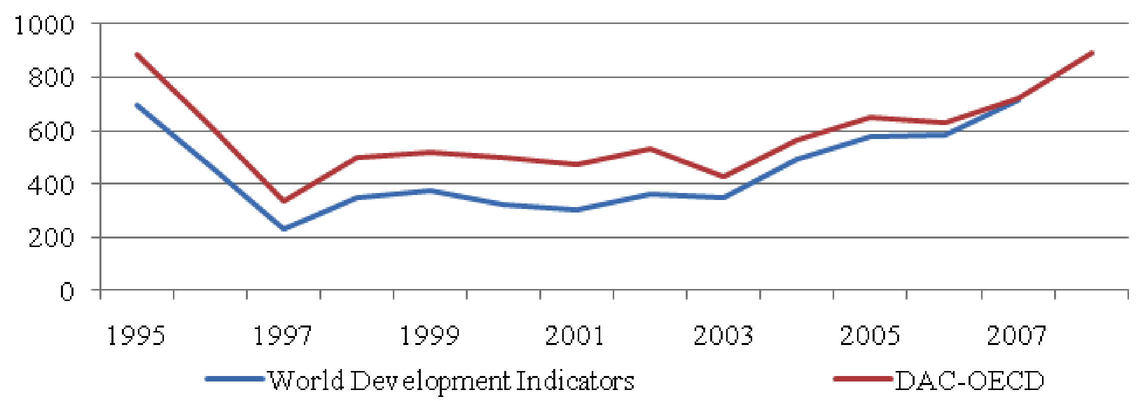
Despite these positive trends, it is important to keep in mind that a considerable percentage of the population still lives under the poverty line (56.9% in 2005/06). Additionally, many are concerned about rising inequality in Rwanda. Between 1985 and 2000, Rwanda's Gini

[40] GNP per capita stayed relatively constant until the mid-2000s, largely due to the huge influx of returning refugees.
[41] Nominal terms refers to the actual dollar value of debt service forgiven over a period of time (IMF 2005).

coefficient rose from 28.9 to 46.8 (CIA n.d.), and the African Development Bank (AfDB 2008) estimates that, in 2006, it rose again to 51.[42]

Furthermore, despite Kagame's proclivity to denounce foreign aid, Rwanda continues to be a highly aid-dependent nation. Rwanda's aid dependency has decreased sharply from a high of 94.92% immediately following the genocide. However, it remains well over the ODA as 10% of GNI mark, which is generally utilized to identify an aid-dependent county. According to the World Bank's Development Indicators, ODA as a percentage of GNI has remained over 20% since the early 2000s. Figure 4.2 below provides an overview of ODA to Rwanda from 1995-2008.[43]

Figure 4.2: ODA to Rwanda, 1995-2008 (current USD million)[44]



Source: World Development Indicators and OECD-DAC[45]

As figure 4.2 illustrates, Rwanda received a large amount of emergency aid immediately after the genocide, but aid declined sharply in the years following.[46] Additionally, there was a

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[42] See Ansoms (2005) for a discussion on growth, poverty and inequality in Rwanda following the genocide.
[43] For a discussion of the different sources and discrepancies between Rwanda aid statistics see Tew (2009).
[44] Foreign aid sent to refugee camps in neighboring countries (such as Zaire, Tanzania, and Burundi) between 1995 and 2000 is not captured in figure 4.2.
[45] OECD-DAC data is available at http://stats.oecd.org/qwids/. Date from the WDI project is available at http://data.worldbank.org/data-catalog/world-development-indicators.

smaller decline in ODA in the early 2000s. This was caused by increased Rwandan military activity in Eastern DRC (where Hutu militants fled flowing the genocide). However, since 2003, aid has been increasing steadily; ODA reached over $893 million in 2008 (OECD-DAC). This means that, for the first time, annual foreign assistance surpassed the $882 million sent to Rwanda immediately following the genocide. According to a recent report on ODA produced by the GoR, 95% of aid to Rwanda comes in the form of grants, with more than half going to the social sectors (GoR 2010d).

The official line is that ODA represents 49% of the GoR's budget (GoR 2010d). This number is conveniently under 50%, and the percentage is likely much higher. During field interviews, one NGO representative put the actual figure closer to 90% (Interview I-VIII, 11.02.09). According to a senior UNDP representative (who was previously on staff at the Ministry of Finance), the government's recent emphasis on private development and public/private partnerships is political. The government discourse on aid is that it is a short-term solution not a long-term one. However, Rwanda remains a "donor darling" (Interview I-XIV, 11.06.09).

As table 4.4 below shows, Rwanda remains much more wedded to foreign assistance than other Sub-Saharan African countries and other low-income countries. With only 34,193 taxpayers in 2009 (in a country with a population of more than 11 million people), dependency on foreign aid is not likely to change anytime soon (Rwanda Civil Society Platform 2010: 5).[47]

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[46] There are discrepancies between different agencies reporting on the amount of aid sent to Rwanda (and elsewhere). See Tew (2009) for a discussion of the different sources and discrepancies between Rwandan aid statistics.

[47] Decreasing dependency also means increasing compliance with the existing tax code. While large taxpayers have a compliance rate of 94.9%, there is low compliance among small to medium taxpayers – 37.6% (Rwanda Civil Society Platform 2010, 23).

Table 4.4: Aid Dependency in Rwanda, 2008

	Rwanda	Sub-Saharan Africa	Low-income countries
Amount of aid per capita ($)	$96	$49	$45
As % of GNI	21%	4.3%	9.2%
As % of gross capital formation	86.7%	22%	39.6%
As % of imports	63.6%	8.8%	21.4%

Source: World Development Indicators

Post-genocide governance: The Rwandan Patriotic Front and Paul Kagame

Since 1994, Rwanda has been led by the RRF, which now functions as a political party and the state military. The core-base of the RPF is small, largely made up of English-speaking Tutsis refugees who fled to Uganda prior to 1994. In other words, the core constituency of the current regime is a small percentage of the already minority Tutsi ethnic group (Strauss and Waldorf 2011).

At the helm of the RPF is its wartime leader Paul Kagame. Although Pasteur Bizimungu (a moderate Hutu) was initially appointed interim president, Kagame ruled from behind the scenes, serving as Minister of Defense and Party Chairman. Kagame officially took over as president in 2000 after Bizimungu resigned.[48] In 2003, Kagame won the country's first post-genocide election with an overwhelming 95.5% of the vote. In August 2010, Kagame was re-elected to another seven-year term with 93% of the vote (African Elections Database 2010).

There are both fans and critics of the current state of Rwandan politics and President Kagame's leadership. Well-known journalists and public intellectuals, such as Stephan Kinzer (2008), Philip Gourevitch (2009), and Fareed Zakaria (2009), hail Rwanda as a site of remarkable transformation. In a recent article, Zakaria wrote, "Rwanda has become a model for

[48] Bizimungu later became a critic of the regime and attempted to form an opposition party. In 2002, he was convicted for embezzling state funds, inciting violence, and criminal association. He claims these charges were politically motivated (BBC News 2006).

the African renaissance. It is now stable, well ordered, and being rebuilt every month." He added, "Ask anyone who has studied Rwanda—African or Westerner—what its secret is and they will say leadership, by which they mean Paul Kagame" (2009). Kagame's supporters include President Bill Clinton, who awarded Kagame his Global Citizen award in 2009 (Clinton Global Initiative 2009), and Former UK Prime Minister, Tony Blair, who serves as an advisor to Kagame (Wintour 2008). In 2009, Kagame was named on of the "fifty faces that shaped the decade" by the *Financial Times* (2009) and one of Time Magazine's "Time 100" in the category "leaders and revolutionaries" (Warren 2009).

However, in other circles Kagame and his policies face intense criticism. Much of this criticism has historically come from human rights advocates, who are critical of RPF involvement in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (formerly Zaire),[49] constraints on individual freedoms and the press, and reports of arbitrary detention and coercive practices within Rwanda itself.

Recently, more scholarly critiques of RPF policies have also emerged. In a recent volume on state-building and human rights in Rwanda, several well-known Rwandan scholars "register considerable concern." In summarizing the volume, the editors, Scott Strauss and Lars Waldorf, note that:

> Based on their research and experiences, most contributors to this volume have developed deep concern about the depth and durability of Rwanda's recovery, even while recognizing the country's achievements…the volume calls attention the social and political costs of repression, exclusion, growing inequality, a general climate of fear and intimidation, and impunity for crimes

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[49] The RPF and Kagame have been accused of both supporting and participating in the ongoing atrocities in the Kivu region of the DRC. Such accusation recently received more weight when a UN mapping exercise of the atrocities committed in Eastern Zaire from 1993-2003 was leaked. The report suggests that the Hutu population living in Zaire (not just persons responsible for the 1994 genocide against the Tutsis) were directly targeted, constituting a potential genocide and documents RPF involvement in such campaigns (Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights 2010). The GoR denounced the mapping exercise both in the popular press (threatening to withdrawal Rwandan peacekeeping troops in Sudan) and in a formal statement (GoR 2010e).

> against humanity and war crimes committed in Rwandan and in the DRC (2011, 7).

The editors go on to suggest that Rwanda has all of the traits identified by James Scott as necessary for "the most tragic episodes of state-initiated social engineering" (Scott 1998, 4; Stauss and Waldorf 2011, 12-13).

As table 4.5 shows, Rwanda has made many improvements to governance since 1996, including huge gains in "control of corruption" and "government effectiveness." However, Rwanda's score for "voice and accountability" remains low due to limited freedom of expression of the citizenry and press,[50] and accusations of politically motivated detention, amongst other things.

Table 4.5: Worldwide Governance Indicators for Rwanda, 1996-2008

	1996	2000	2002	2004	2006	2008
Voice & Accountability	12.4	8.2	8.2	9.6	11.5	13
Political Stability	4.8	4.8	4.8	23.1	26.4	37.3
Government Effectiveness	5.7	18.5	14.2	28.4	43.1	48.3
Regulatory Quality	5.4	13.7	22	28.8	31.2	33.3
Rule of Law	5.4	13.7	22	28.8	31.2	33.3
Control of Corruption	N/A	28.6	35	37.9	55.3	59.4

Source: The Worldwide Governance Indications Project[51]

In particular, many are concerned about Rwanda's laws on divisionism, sectarianism, and genocide revisionism and ideology (see, for example, Burnet 2007; Human Rights Watch 2010). Such laws, which have increasingly been strengthened over the course of the 2000s, establish stiff penalties for those guilty of ambiguous crimes, such as "genocide revisionism" or being a "spokesperson for genocide ideology." They have been used to suspend the BBC Kinyarwanda

[50] In August 2009, the GoR passed a new law on the media that gives the Media High Council a great deal more authority, including the power to suspend newspapers and impose criminal penalties on journalists who incite discrimination or show contempt to the president. The law also requires all journalists to have formal training in communication or journalism, which most journalists at independent papers do not have (Department of State 2009; Human Rights Watch 2010).

[51] Available at http://info.worldbank.org/governance/wgi/index.asp

radio service, accuse well-know human rights advocates, such as Alison Des Forges,[52] and remove opposition candidates from competition (Waldorf 2011). According to Waldorf, "… Rwanda's law on genocide ideology is so broadly drafted that it is easily manipulated for personal and political reasons. It also conflates any challenges to the government with genocide ideology" (2011, 59).

In Rwanda, power is largely thought to be concentrated in a small, inner circle. The 2003 constitution established an independent parliament and judiciary branch. However, parliament is dominated by RPF representatives and is widely viewed as "a rubber stamp to policy initiatives emerging from the ministries and the president's office" (Burnet 2007: 4). In parliamentary elections, the RPF and its allies won 73.8% of the vote in 2003 and 78.8% in 2008 (Longman 2011).[53] Similarly, judicial independency is questionable on many fronts, and the RPF has not been able to answer the many allegations leveled against it.[54]

Furthermore, since the mid-1990s, the GoR has expressed a strong skepticism about civil society. In December 1995, the GoR suspended the operations of eighteen NGOs, and an additional thirty-eight were told to leave within a week.[55] The GoR produced reports in 1996 and 1997 that claimed NGOs were uncontrolled, uncoordinated, competitive, and diverted human resources from the government. The reports also claimed that NGOs often overlapped, did not cooperate in evaluations, were not transparent and spread too thinly, lacked quality staff, and

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[52] Des Forges, who died in a plane crash in 1999, was well-know for her activism and detailed accounts of the 1994 genocide (see, for example, Des Forges 1999). Therefore, accusing her with genocide denial is bizarre.
[53] Longman (2011) argues that, while in 2003 presidential electors were altered to favor the RPF candidate, the 2008 parliamentary elections were altered to look more democratic. According to sampling carried out by EU election monitors, the RPF actually got close to 94% of the vote. Longman argues that this was largely because communities fear the repercussions of not supporting the RPF.
[54] According to Human Rights Watch, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees estimates that the RPF killed between 25,000 and 45,000 civilians in 1994 (Human Rights Watch 2010: 2). However, Rwanda has only tried 36 soldiers. Additionally, the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda has faced intense criticism for declining investigations on war crimes allegedly committed by the RPF (Burnet 2007).
[55] A third of the NGOs asked to leave were French (Hayman 2006).

encouraged limited knowledge transfer (Hayman 2006: 100). NGOs that are critical of the government's record on human rights, including press freedom and arbitrary detention, have been particularly targeted (Gready 2011).

4.3. Rwanda's Contemporary Development Partners

Below, I discuss the aid portfolio of the largest multilateral and bilateral donors to Rwanda. (See table 4.6 for a list of Rwanda's top twenty donors.) There are important differences between the donors' approaches to development. These differences stem from a variety of factors, ranging from traits of the donors themselves (i.e. ideology, purpose, organization, and management) to the particular nature of the donor's relationship with the country or region. For example, the Netherlands and the UK both had ministers that took a particular interest in Rwanda immediately following the genocide.

Additionally, how individual donor representatives view Rwanda and the Rwandan leadership influences the country's aid portfolio. As Hayman argues "…it is possible to 'read' Rwanda in very different ways, and this is very important for reflecting on relations between the GoR and donors, as how donors understand Rwanda and the GoR depends greatly upon their perceptions of the state and country" (2006: 145). Depending on what aspects are focused on, i.e. Rwanda's economic successes or its human rights record, the image can look very different. (Unsworth and Uvin (2002) refer to this duality as the "contradictory faces" of Rwanda).

Differences between donors manifest themselves most readily in the types of aid programs that donors pursue. As the subsequent chapters explore further, certain donors prefer to work with the Rwandan government and provide budget support, while others prefer to fund individual projects. This section introduces the reader to these differences.[56]

Table 4.6: Top Twenty Donors to Rwanda

Top 20 Donors, ODA Total (net disbursements), 2008 Only		**Top 20 Donors, ODA (net disbursements), 1994-2008**	
Donor	US$ million	Donor	US$ million
1. IDA	133.44	1. IDA	1175.81
2. United States	114.81	2. United States	1067.5
3. United Kingdom	106.96	3. EC	1057.6
4. EC	95.57	4. United Kingdom	1012.71
5. Global Fund	77.64	5. Netherlands	574.38
6. AfDF	61.45	6. Belgium	501.1
7. Belgium	60.67	7. Germany	442.48
8. Netherlands	36.16	8. WFP	382.31
9. IFAD	27.57	9. AfDF	358.08
10. Germany	22.89	10. UNHCR	263.2
11. Spain	22.82	11. Canada	251.8
12. Japan	15.75	12. Sweden	234.01
13. Canada	13.81	13. Global Fund	230.89
14. Sweden	13.73	14. Norway	206.01
15. Arab Agencies	10.65	15. France	203.42
16. Nordic Dev. Fund	10.37	16. UNICEF	165.84
17. UNICEF	7.86	17. Switzerland	156.42
18. Luxembourg	7.39	18. IMF	126.67
19. WFP	6.82	19. UNDP	105.83
20. GAVI	5.87	20. IFAD	96.76

Source: OECD-DAC

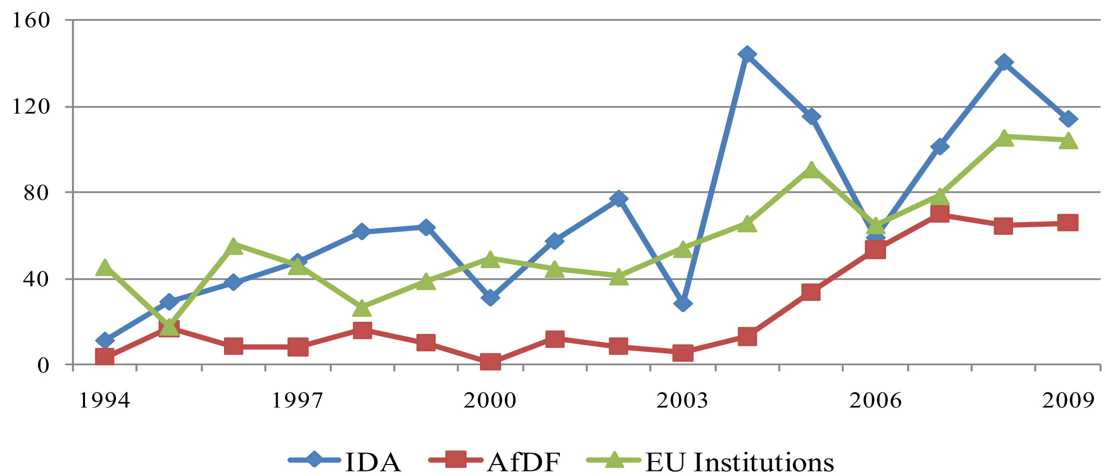
Multilateral Aid Agencies

Figure 4.3 below provides an overview of ODA disbursements since 1994 for the three largest multilateral donors to Rwanda: the International Development Association (IDA), the African Development Bank (AfDB), and the European Commission (EC). IDA, better known as the World Bank, is the largest donor to Rwanda. It has distributed over $1.2 billion USD to Rwanda since 1994. However, funding from the World Bank has been highly variable with sharp

[56] See Hayman (2006) for a lengthy discussion on the differences between all of Rwanda's donors, as well as the many reasons for these differences. See chapter three, in particular.

declines in 2000, 2003, and 2006. The EC and AfDB (through its funding mechanism the African Development Fund) provide a more consistent source of aid. Both have dramatically increased their foreign assistance packages to Rwanda in the years since the genocide.

Figure 4.3: ODA from Multilateral Donors, 1994-2008 (current USD millions)



Source: OECD-DAC

In addition to providing large amounts of aid, the World Bank is a very active development partner in Rwanda. According to its Country Assistance Strategy, it currently has eleven active projects in Rwanda, plus budget support. Commitments from the World Bank Group[57] are projected to reach $516 million over fiscal years (FY) 2009-12. The only sector that the Bank does not have a presence in (intentionally) is political governance. However, no new funding for education, water and sanitation, HIV/AIDs, urban management or public sector reform is planned for FY2009-2012, as the bank focuses on budget support (The World Bank 2008). Currently the World Bank co-chairs four sectors, more than any other donor.[58]

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[57] The World Bank Group in Rwanda also includes the International Finance Corporation (IFC) and the Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA); however, the amount of aid contributed by these organizations is much lower than the amounts contributed by IDA.

[58] Those sectors are agriculture, livestock, and forestry; energy, ICT, science, and technology; public administration; and capacity building.

Additionally, it took the lead in preparing both the agriculture and energy sector-wide approaches or SWAPs (see pg. 128) (The World Bank 2008; AfDB 2008).

The next largest multilateral donor is the European Commission. According to its country strategy paper, the EC plans to allocate €290 million (approximately $409 million[59]) in long-term programmable development operations to Rwanda during FY 2008-2013 (European Commission 2007, 38).[60] The EC is an active donor in eleven sectors and leads the roads and transportation sector (AfDB 2008; European Commission 2007). The EC currently sees itself in a "fourth phase" of development in Rwanda. This phase is characterized by increased alignment with the GoR and its poverty reduction strategy, and greater alignment with other donors.

As part of its focus on alignment, the EC has increasingly been providing direct budget support. The EC began budget support in Rwanda in 1999 and, since 2000, has provided, on average, €20 million (approximately $28 million) per year in budget support to Rwanda. During the FY 2008-2013, 60% or €175 million (approximately $204 million) of the EC's funding envelope to Rwanda will come in the form of general budget support. In addition, the EC has two major focal sectors, rural development, and infrastructure for regional interconnectivity. Cumulatively, these sectors will receive 31% of the total amount of aid. The remaining 9% of aid will be spread across governance, support for trade, and technical cooperation (European Commission 2007).

In recent years, the African Development Bank (AfDB) has assumed a more central role in Rwanda. (The current president of the AfDB, Donald Kaberuka, is Rwandan.) In the mid-2000s, the AfDB began significantly increasing its funding to Rwanda, and its activity across

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[59] All euro to dollar conversions are based on the conversion rate on July 18th, 2011 (1 euro = 1.41 dollars).
[60] This figure only includes A-allocation funds. There is also a smaller amount of B-allocation funds (€4 million) for unforeseen needs.

sectors grew. According to its country strategy for 2008-2009, the organization is guided by two main pillars: economic infrastructure, and competitive and enterprise development. Specific projects include involvement in the Methane Gas Project at Lake Kivu[61] and the Rwanda Private Sector Capacity Building Project (AfDB 2008). Recently the AfDB also began providing general budget support to Rwanda. For the FY 2010/2011, the AfDB promised $27.6 million in direct budget support to the GoR (Kagire 2009).

While the United Nations no longer provides large amounts of aid to Rwanda,[62] it still maintains a strong presence, due to its active involvement across sectors and its role in aid coordination.[63] As it does in many countries, the UN in Rwanda now serves less as a direct funder and more as an administrator, advisor, and implementer. According to two interviewees, the UN is moving towards a policy advisory role in Rwanda (Interview II-XI, 06.16.10; Interview I-VI, 10.30.09).

The UN assumed responsibility of aid coordination in Rwanda in 1999, and today has the largest on-the-ground presence of any organization in the country. They now co-chair a forum for development partners and the GoR (see chapter six, pg. 121), and several common funds are facilitated by UN agencies.[64] Rwanda is also a pilot "One UN" country. The One UN program, which began in 2007, is intended to coordinate the multiple UN bodies working simultaneously in one country and is based on four principals: one leader, one budget, one programme, and one office (United Nations 2007).

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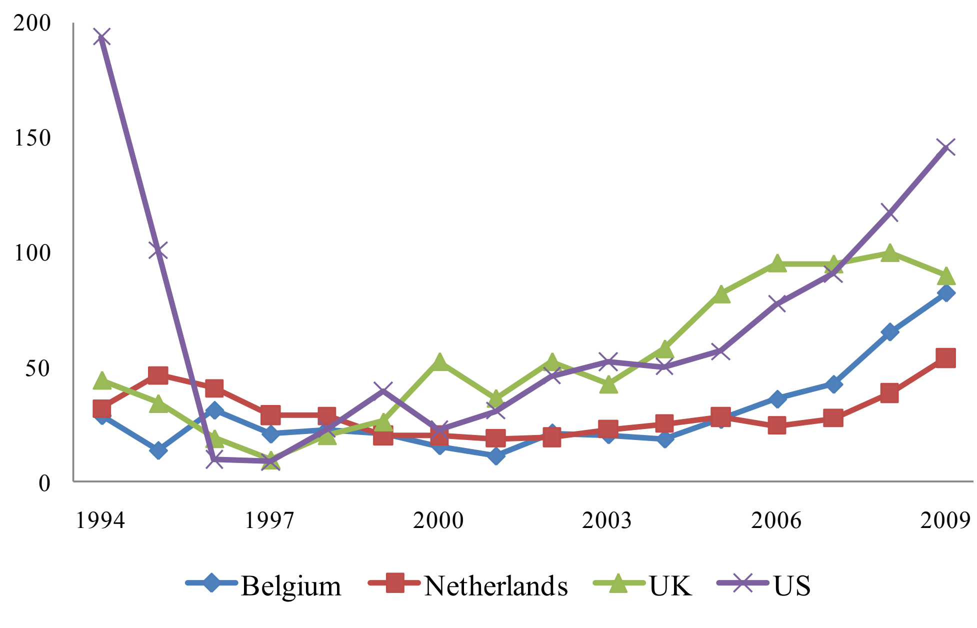
[61] This project seeks to extract and convert methane gas currently found in Lake Kivu into energy.
[62] Immediately following the genocide, UN institutions provided large amounts of ODA. In 1995 alone, UN institutions gave $346.62 million. The majority of this aid was emergency aid and came from the UNHCR ($118.81m) and the World Food Programme ($178.63m). However, since the emergency phase, UN direct funding has dropped dramatically. In 2008, the total ODA from all UN institutions was $25.76 million (OECD-DAC).
[63] The five principals of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework in Rwanda are good governance; health, population, HIV, and nutrition; education; environment; sustainable growth and social protection (United Nations 2007).
[64] Common funds include an election basket fund and a fund to support aid coordination.

Bilateral Aid Agencies

Figure 4.4 graphs annual ODA from Rwanda's top four bilateral donors since 1994. As the figure demonstrates, the US and the UK are by far the largest bilateral donors to Rwanda. France is notably absent from this list. The GoR's public fallout and recent shift away from the francophone world had created ripples throughout the Rwandan donor community and marks a dramatic change in Rwandan diplomatic relations.[65] Immediately following the genocide, a group of "new" donors arrived in Rwanda, including the Netherlands, Norway, the UK and Sweden. In contrast to the more "traditional" donors, such as France and Belgium, these new donors do not have a long history in Rwanda and are not associated with the previous Habyarimana regime.

Figure 4.4: ODA from Bilateral Donors, 1994-2008 (current USD millions)



Source: OECD-DAC

[65] Tensions between France and Rwanda have been strained since the genocide but came to a head in the mid-2000s. In 2006, a French judge issued arrest warrants for nine senior GoR officials, including Kagame. This resulted to in the severing of diplomatic ties. However, in 2010, France and Rwanda restored diplomatic relations (BBC News 2009; Sundaram 2010).

The largest of these "new" donors is the United Kingdom, which had no presence in Rwanda prior to the genocide, and no bilateral aid program. Immediately following the genocide, the UK began providing military and humanitarian assistance, and established an embassy in Kigali in 1996. Shortly after, an election brought the Labour Party to power in the UK. The new UK government was not only pro-development aid, but also included a strong ally of Kagame, Clare Short (who was appointed Minister for International Development).[66]

Under the new administration, the UK's bilateral program in Rwanda expanded rapidly. Even though Rwanda isn't strategically important to the UK, since 2000 it has been one of the top ten recipients of UK aid (Hayman 2006).[67] While the UK has increasingly been looking at Rwanda with a more critical eye, it generally paints a very positive picture of Rwanda and the GoR in its policy documents and in dealings with other donors. Former Prime Minister Tony Blair serves as an advisor to Kagame, and, in 2009, Rwanda become the second non-former colony to join the Commonwealth of States (Kron 2009).

At the same time that the UK began engaging in Rwanda, it also began experimenting with a new approach to development that emphasized partnering with recipient countries. Rwanda became a model for this new approach, and the UK began working in close collaboration with Rwandan authorities and advocating for budget support to Rwanda. British aid to Rwanda now overwhelmingly comes in the form of general budget support, and the UK is by far the largest bilateral budget support donor.[68]

According to the new Development Assistance Database (DAD), the UK's Department for International Development (DFID) dispersed \$56.9 million to Rwanda in the form of general

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[66] A representative from DFID put it this way, 'the reason DFID is here is Clare Short' (Interview I-XII, 11.04.09).
[67] See Hayman (2006, chap. 7) for more details on the history and background of the UK's engagement with Rwanda.
[68] Two-thirds of the UK's aid to Rwanda is dispersed directly into the national budget (Interview I-XII, 11.04.09).

budget support and an additional $5 million in sector budget support in 2007.[69] In 2008, direct budget support from DFID alone constituted 6% of the GoR's national budget. Furthermore, the UK has placed a great deal of faith in Rwandan systems and the current regime. To measure progress, the UK relies heavily on the MDGs and targets established by the national poverty reduction strategy, for which they strongly advocated. Top GoR officials often refer to the UK as a "friend."

On the other hand, the United States takes a very different approach in Rwanda (and elsewhere). While the UK primarily supports the GoR and little is known about what it does outside of the capital city, the United States is involved in multiple projects throughout the country (primarily through USAID). The United States is very active in the health sector, where it concentrates on HIV/AIDs treatment and prevention. During the FY2004-2008 the US gave $151 million to the health sector alone. Rwanda is also one of the threshold countries for the newly established United States Millennium Challenge Cooperation (MCC).[70] In contrast to the UK, US government funds to Rwanda are exclusively project funds, and, as a representative of USAID put it, the US is not moving away from project funding unless Congress changes (Interview I-III, 10.23.09).[71]

As figure 4.4 shows, US involvement in Rwanda spiked post-genocide, with ODA to Rwanda reaching $194 million in 1994 and then sharply declining to $10 million 1996. However, since the early 2000s, the amount of ODA provided to Rwanda by the US has steadily

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[69] Source: DAD Rwanda, http://dad.synisys.com/dadrwanda/ (December 1, 2010).
[70] The new Millennium Challenge Cooperation targets countries that meet seventeen criteria. Countries fully meeting MCC requirements ("compact countries") are eligible for large, five-year grants. Countries that come close to meeting the requirements ("threshold countries") are eligible for smaller, three-year grants. Rwanda is a threshold country, meeting ten of the seventeen indicators. More information about the MCC's selection criteria can be found at http://www.mcc.gov/mcc/selection/index.shtml.
[71] The US is currently "exploring" the possibility of sector budget support to agriculture (Interview II-VIII, 06.09.10).

increased. In 2008, Rwanda received $114.81 million in ODA from the United States. There are a number of likely explanations for why ODA to Rwanda has increased rather rapidly, including: remorse about the genocide, the creation of AFRICOM (which is responsible for US military operations and relations in Africa), and the fact that Kagame is regarded highly by former US Presidents Bill Clinton and George W. Bush (Totolo 2009; Kinzer 2008). However, it is important to keep in mind that, although Rwanda gets a lot of its aid from the United States, Rwanda is not a top recipient of US aid, nor is it a US priority country.

Several other donors, such as Belgium, the Netherlands, and Sweden, have also been active in Rwanda since the genocide. Belgian development aid has been in Rwanda since 1962, when Rwanda achieved independence from Belgium, and Rwanda is currently the number two recipient of Belgian foreign aid (OECD 2009a).[72] Belgium is involved in many sectors; however, its largest contributions are to the health sector. In contrast to the US, it now gives budget support to the health sector (see chapter six, pg. 130), although it initially expressed reservations about providing budget support.[73]

Since 1994, the Netherlands have been a top bilateral donor to Rwanda, focusing their work on two broad areas: (1) effective, efficient and increased access to and delivery of basic services, and (2) sustainable and equitable production, income and employment for the poor. The Netherlands also provides sector budget support (see chapter five).

Lastly, Sweden's development aid has historically come in the form of general budget support, and its development agency, SIDA, is very active in efforts to promote aid coordination and harmonization. Consequently, the GoR and other donors often see Sweden as an influential and important donor despite lower amounts of ODA. However, Stokholm suspended general

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[72] Belgium aid is target to a much more limited set of country than the US or the UK.
[73] For an analysis of Belgian support to Rwanda see Hayman (2006, chap. 7).

budget support to Rwanda in 2008 after a UN report accused the country of supporting armed rebellion in neighboring DRC (Swedish Government Offices 2008).[74]

Donor differences

Although several donors are active in Rwanda, how these donors pursue development varies. While the US in many ways continues business as usual, other donors (in particular, the UK, EC, and World Bank) have increasingly embraced new aid programs, such as budget support, that are thought to promote recipient-country ownership. The difference is stark when you look at the percentage of a country's ODA that is recorded in the Rwandan national budget.

Table 4.7: Percent of ODA Recorded in the National Budget by Donor

Donor	2007	2008	2009/2010
United Kingdom	**96%**	**74%**	**94%**
European Commission	80%	69%	92%
Netherlands	42%	79%	90%
AfDB	86%	94%	88%
World Bank	50%	73%	85%
Germany	46%	77%	62%
Canada	0%	33%	59%
United Nations	20%	13%	44%
Switzerland	0%	34%	39%
Sweden	52%	54%	25%
Japan	29%	43%	16%
United States	**0%**	**1%**	**0%**

Source: Donor Performance Assessment Framework, DPAF (GoR 2010b)

While over 90% of ODA provided by the UK and the EC to Rwanda in FY2009/2010 was recorded in the nation budget, 0% of US aid was. The implications of these differences will become more apparent as I move through my case studies.

[74]Sweden had previously suspended budget support in 2004. The Netherlands also suspended budget support after the 2008 UN report but has since reinstated sector budget support.

4.4. Concluding Remarks

In this chapter, I first outlined the contemporary history of development in Rwanda, discussing the role of donors and development schemes prior to, during, and after the genocide and civil war. This discussion contextualizes the forthcoming case studies (chapters five though seven). Rwanda's history of violent conflict is all the more reason to be attentive to the political implications of development and foreign aid in the country.

Second, I provided a summary of the current Rwandan political context. In particular, I focused on the existing domestic power dynamics. Despite the fact that ownership emphasizes recipient-country control, there has been little theory on how the domestic political climate influences recipient-country ownership. Whether or not domestic actors are tightly or loosely coordinated is likely to influence donors' choices of who to work with, and, consequently, who gains influence under the ownership approach. If one or two domestic actors are dominant, it only makes sense that donors would work primarily with them.

In Rwanda, authority primarily rests with the executive branch led by the Rwandan Patriotic Front. This is not to say that other domestic actors do not play a role, or that there are not attempts to challenge political authority in Rwanda. Diaspora groups outside Rwanda are actively organizing to challenge Kagame, and some have recently suggested that serious challenges to Kagame's authority are emerging within the RPF itself (Sterns 2010). However, thus far, Kagame and his supporters have dominated the Rwandan political landscape, and contestation has largely been kept under wraps. As a result, there is little reason to believe that an ownership approach will increase the influence of citizens-at-large in Rwanda.

Third, I described the major bilateral and multilateral donors currently providing development aid to Rwanda. While all donors claim poverty reduction as their main objective, their development strategies are quite different and the salience of the ownership model varies across donors. If donors do not prioritize ownership, there is very little reason to expect a change in their practices as a result of the global emphasis on ownership.

Chapter 5
Poverty Reduction Strategies and Budget Support

In this chapter, I analyze Rwanda's experience with the poverty reduction strategy process and budget support. Poverty reduction strategies and budget support are the aid programs most commonly associated with ownership and the Paris Declaration (Armon 2007; Hayman 2006; Koeberle, Stavreski, and Walliser 2006; Knoll 2008). Both are thought to encourage donors to use national systems and priorities and increase the recipient-country's influence over development policy. Historically, aid has been channeled into countries through donor-determined projects or through structural adjustment loans laced with conditionalities. Alternatively, budget support and poverty reduction strategies allow recipient governments to allocate aid towards self-determined priorities and then fund these projects using aid money deposited into the national treasury.

Given the variables of interest outlined in chapter three, in this case study, I am looking for evidence that poverty reduction strategies and budget support have allowed the GoR to be more involved in decision-making *and* given them more influence over development policy. At the same time, I am looking for evidence that donors have decreased their role in policy decision-making, allowing the government to lead—even when it conflicts with their interests. Lastly, I am looking for evidence that citizens are playing a larger role in decision-making and have a greater say in development policy.

I find that the GoR has become more involved in decision-making processes. However, this increased participation has not necessarily translated into increased influence.

I find little evidence that government policymaker's preferences take precedence over donors' preferences. Contrary to the predictions of the ownership approach laid out in chapters two and three, I find that donor participation in budget support and the poverty reduction strategy process may actually allow some donors to have more influence by integrating them into the day-to-day operations of the Rwandan government. Instead of giving up their influence, many donors have simply shifted their tactics, becoming more involved in the "policy dialogue" or with technical assistance. This change is more pronounced with those donors who have historically advocated for ownership and ownership approaches.

Furthermore, I find no evidence supporting the prediction that poverty reduction strategies and budget support increase citizen influence. The domestic actor that has profited the most from the poverty reduction strategy process and budget support is the Ministry of Finance (in combination with the president's office). Citizens remain relatively removed from decision-making processes, as do local governments and line ministries.

This chapter is organized into four major sections. First, I provide an overview of the two aid programs, explaining how poverty reduction strategies and budget support are thought to increase ownership in recipient-countries. I also note recent critiques of budget support and the poverty reduction strategy program. My analysis builds on these critiques, investigating many of the issues touched on in this work by empirically examining one country's experience with budget support and the poverty reduction strategy process. Second, I provide a descriptive overview of the aid programs' history in Rwanda. I provide a summary of Rwanda's two poverty reduction strategy papers, details on which donors provide budget support and how much they provide, and explain how budget support is governed in Rwanda.

I then move on to my analysis. In this section, I argue that, in Rwanda, the poverty reduction strategy program and budget support have resulted in three outcomes contrary to the predictions of the ownership model. One, although donors are now more likely to use national systems, there is little evidence that donors give preference to government priorities, if they are not in line with their own. Two, rather than decrease the role of donors in the policy process, participation in budget support likely increases a donor's say over development policy. Three, the Rwandan poverty reduction strategy process and budget support have not made the policy process more inclusive or increased domestic accountability; instead, these aid programs have centralized domestic authority in the Ministry of Finance. I concluded by summarizing how my findings map on to the variables of interest identified in chapter three.

5.1. Poverty Reduction Strategies and Budget Support Worldwide

Origins and prominence

The poverty reduction strategy program emerged in 1999 and budget support shortly thereafter. In the 1990s, the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) program was introduced by the Bretton Woods Institutions to provide debt relief to developing countries. During a meeting in Cologne, Germany in 1999, the leaders of the G-7 countries added to the HIPC requirements that participating countries lay out their own medium-term development goals and strategies in a poverty reduction strategy paper or PRSP (IMF 2010).[75] As early as 2001, seventy low-income states had either a full or interim PRSP and many states are currently working on their second or third PRSP.[76] Almost all bilateral and multilateral donors at least consult the recipient country's PRSP when designing their country strategies.

A country's poverty reduction strategy is supposed to provide a road map for development in the recipient country *and* guide World Bank and IMF aid allocation in each recipient country. Instead of countries being told which reforms to make, countries are asked to outline their own plans for economic development, which is then funded by donors.

Following the introduction of the poverty reduction strategy program, donors began issuing a new type of program aid (i.e., aid that is not tied to a particular project) linked to the country's PRSP - budget support.[77] At a basic level, budget support is a resource transfer directly into the budget or treasury of the receiving country. Budget support allows the recipient country to use its own allocation, procurement, and accounting structures. While sector budget support (SBS) is earmarked for a particular sector, such as education or health, general budget support (GBS) is completely un-earmarked (Beasley et al. 2005).

The adjectives "new" or "partnership" are often added to the term "budget support" to distinguish it from alternative forms of program aid, such as structural adjustment loans, which were popular in the 1980s and early 1990s.[78] "New" budget support places an emphasis on partnerships between donors and the recipient government, poverty reduction,

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[75] Other criteria for participation include (1) be eligible to borrow from IDA, (2) face an unsustainable debt burden that cannot be addressed through traditional debt relief mechanisms, and 3) a track record of reform and sound policies through the IMF and World Bank (IMF 2010). The Joint Boards of the IMF and World Bank officially approved the PRSP program in December 1999 (Cheru 2006).
[76] New PRSPs are generally prepared every three to five years. For a full list of all countries with a PRSP or interim PRSP see http://go.worldbank.org/LYE7YNYBH0.
[77] Alternative types of program aid include balance of payment support and debt relief (Hammond 2006).
[78] For a discussion on whether or not budget support is really "new" see Knoll (2008).

and, most importantly, supports the national development strategy articulated in the country's PRSP (Purcell, Dom, and Ahohamuteze 2006).

As one interviewee put it, the push for budget support comes from "50 years of failure" (Interview I-XII, 11.04.09). Budget support is supposed to provide a more sustainable approach to development assistance. Stand-alone development projects can leave behind big, temporary structures that are no longer of any use (Interview I-XI, 11.04.09). Alternatively, budget support funds long-term initiatives and contributes to the growth of sound state structures by directly supporting the state and its initiatives.

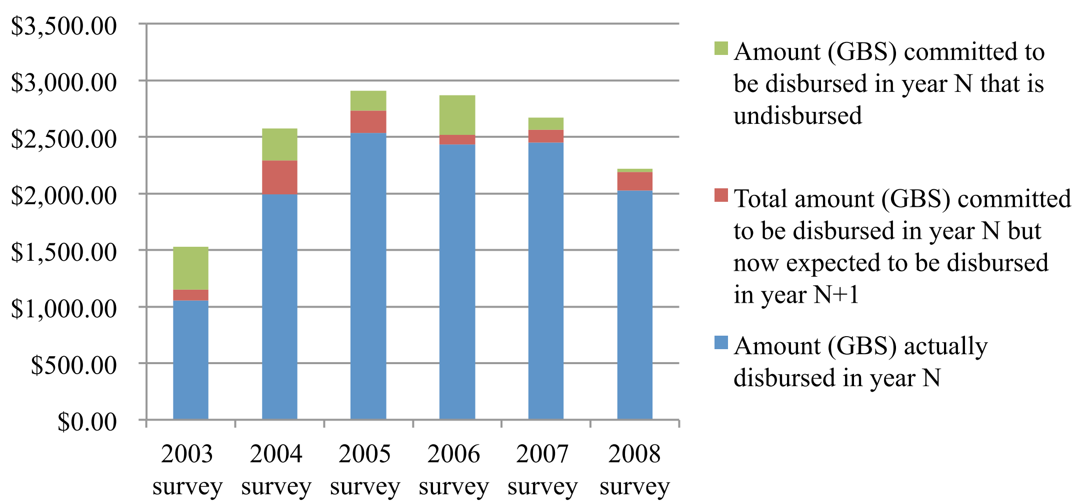
Over the past decade, leading bilateral and multilateral donors have increased the percentage of aid given as budget support. As budget support does not require individual project approval or additional donor staff, it offers an easy way for donors to increase aid quickly. In 2001, thirteen percent of lending from the World Bank came in the form of budget support (Barkan 2009). Budget support now accounts for approximately half of World Bank lending through IDA and half of the grants provided to Africa through the Poverty Reduction Support Credit mechanism. Additionally, roughly half of UK and EC aid is provided as budget support (Hayman 2011). The majority of budget support (60-70%) goes to Sub-Saharan Africa, where, on average, 30% of a country's budget now comes from general budget support (Knoll 2008).

Accurate data on budget support are difficult to come by.[79] However, from 2003 to 2008 the Strategic Partnership with Africa (SPA) conducted a yearly survey of African

[79] Data on budget support should approve soon. The DAD Working Party on Statistics agreed on a new classification of aid modalities and instruments that will take effect in 2011 that includes GBS and SBS (OECD 2005b).

countries engaged in general budget support.[80] This dataset is not without its flaws: it is not comprehensive, commitment and disbursement rates are self-reported, and the number of countries in the survey fluctuates. However, it is the most extensive source of data on budget support currently available. Using data from the SPA budget support alignment surveys, figure 5.1 provides of snapshot of general budget support to Sub-Saharan Africa since 2003.

Figure 5.1: General Budget Support to Sub-Saharan Africa, 2003-2008 (in USD million) [81]



Source: Strategic Partnership for Africa Budget Support Alignment Survey[82]

Predictions of poverty reduction strategies and budget support

Poverty reduction strategies and budget support are thought to promote ownership for several reasons analogous to the predictions of the ownership approach outlined in chapter two. First, both PRSPs and budget support are supposed to increase the influence of recipient-country governments by encouraging the use of national systems and priorities. Historically, aid has been channeled into recipient countries via donor-determined projects or

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[80] An overview of the survey is available at http://www.spasurvey.info.

[81] The decline in budget support from 2007 to 2008 is largely due to a decrease in the number of countries surveyed in 2008. If only countries w participated in the both 2007 and 2008 survey are included, the decrease is only 1.1% (Strategic Partnership with Africa 2009).

[82] Available at http://www.spasurvey.info/

through grants that are conditional on the recipient making specified changes (i.e., structural adjustment loans). In both cases, recipient countries must act according to donor wishes if they want donor money.

Alternatively, the poverty reduction strategy process and budget support are supposed to give more control over development policy to recipient-country governments. Instead of aid being channeled into countries through self-contained projects with donor-determined mandates, governments are supposedly able to allocate aid towards priorities that they determine in their PRSPs and then fund these priorities using money that is directly deposited into their treasury.

Budget support is even argued to encourage donors to use national systems for non-budget support aid. Donors have to trust the accounts into which they deposit aid. Therefore, donors often include capacity-building funds in budget support packages, and make budget support conditional on improvements in national systems, particularly public financial management (PFM) systems (Directorate General for Development 2006). Consequently, budget support is argued to create incentives for recipient countries to improve their national systems, and, if national systems improve, it is believed that donors will be more willing to use national systems for <u>all</u> types of aid.

PSRPs and budget support are also supposed to decrease donor influence. In the past, donors used top-down conditionalities to force recipient states to make specific policy changes; or they provided aid in the form of stand-alone, donor-determined projects. This resulted in hierarchical (and often antagonistic) relationships between donors and recipient-country governments. Together, poverty reduction strategies and budget support are supposed to decrease how much influence donors have over the policy process and let recipient-countries lead (Amin 2006; Oxfam 2009; Mosley and Abrar 2006). According to Cheru, PSRPs “put country-led strategies for development at the heart of development assistance” and “democratize recipient-donor relationships, by replacing the politics of ‘paternalism’ with the politics of ‘partnership’ and ‘mutual accountability’” (2006: 356-57). Similarly, Barkan argues that budget support:

> …requires no rigid conditionalities and is, in a fundamental sense, an expression of trust by members of the donor community in the anticipated performance of recipient governments and, by extension, their leaders. Budget support starts with the premise that the relationship between donor and recipient will be productive and harmonious and not adversarial (2009: 72).

Lastly, some argue that poverty reduction strategies and budget support increase the influence of the recipient-country’s citizens by encouraging higher levels of domestic accountability or "...the ability of citizens to hold the state answerable for its actions, and ultimately to impose sanctions for poor performance" (Hudson and GOVNET Secretariat 2009: 4). Although aid provided in the form of budget support still comes from donors, how it is spent is dictated by the poverty reduction strategy paper not development agencies. Consequently, governments (who draft the PSRP) are responsible for allocating aid, not donors. Furthermore, given that budgets are typically approved by the national parliament, in theory channeling money through the national budgets allows parliamentarians (who are elected by citizens) to influence how aid is allocated. If citizens do not approve of the way aid is being spent, they can express discontent through elections and civil society mechanisms. Under alternative forms of aid distribution, no such mechanisms exist because donors are not reliant on citizens to stay in power (Directorate General for Development 2006).

Critiques of budget support and PRSPs

Early evaluations of both budget support and PRSPs often focused on implementation challenges, such as predictability (Celasun and Walliser 2006; Eifert and Gelb 2006) and fungibility (Koeberle and Stavreski 2006). However, there has recently been more focus on the "political dimensions" of each aid program (Hayman 2011). Much of this newer work suggests that there are several flaws with the aid programs, but has not yet provided a clear story on how budget support and the poverty reduction strategy program impact aid-dependent states. Nor has it outlined the specific reasons *why* budget support has not resulted in the predicted outcomes.

Regarding the impact of the aid programs on donor influence, there is some confusion in the literature (and sometimes within the same document). According to some, budget support and PSRPs have dramatically impacted donor-government relations—often not for the better (Craig and Porter 2003; Unwin 2004). However, others are quick to point out that conditionality remains part and parcel of international development, implying that little has changed (Hayman 2011).

What this literature has in common is the claim that donors have not retreated in the way often assumed by proponents of the budget support. Missing is a broader understanding of when and how donor practices have or have not changed, and a precise understanding of the impact of such changes on the influence of government policymakers and citizens. Additionally, some studies suggest that donor-government relationships may have changed form (Gould 2005; Harrison 2001), but we have no direct evidence of this change, nor a clear understanding of how and why such a change occurs.

Regarding the impact of the aid programs on citizen influence, previous analyses have found little evidence of increased accountability or better governance as a result of either budget support or the poverty reduction strategy program. In Tanzania, Lawson and his colleagues find that intra-government incentives and democratic accountability failed to improve as expected (Lawson et al. 2006), and a five-country case study conducted by USAID found that general budget support did not always appear to strengthen democracy or public accountability (Beasley et al. 2005). In the most comprehensive evaluation of budget support to date, it was found that that general budget support may strengthen the central government, but it does not necessarily strengthen democracy or public accountability (IDD and Associates 2006, xi).

What is again missing from this work is a clear picture of why budget support has apparently not prompted more citizen influence, or governance reform more broadly.[83] The research outlined above suggests that citizen influence has not increased, but provides no explanation of why it has not. Nor does it explore how budget support and the poverty reduction strategy programs have impacted state-society relationships more broadly.

Furthermore, the assumption that government ownership equals national ownership (see pg. 32) has gone largely unexplored in this literature. Hadziyiannakis and Mylonakis argue that an implicit, but fundamental, assumption in budget support operations is, "governments of recipient countries are genuine representatives of their peoples chosen through democratic processes" (2006, 5). How likely is this to reflect reality in many aid-dependent countries? If governments are not actually representative of their peoples, and

[83] Hayman (2011) argues that budget support recipients have largely been dismissive of donor pressures to reform governance practices (including the withdrawal of budget support). Therefore, budget support has largely been ineffective as an instrument of democratic change. However, this focuses on donor influence and does not speak to the implicit assumption within predictions of budget support that citizens will be able influence the policy process more if government policymakers are more involved and have more influence.

budget support and the poverty reduction strategy process gives them more influence, then why would we expect greater citizen influence?

5.2. The Poverty Reduction Strategy Process and Budget Support in Rwanda

Rwanda jumped on the poverty reduction strategy bandwagon quite early, finalizing its first PRSP in June 2002.[84] The first poverty reduction strategy was prepared by the National Poverty Reduction Programme (set up by the Ministry of Finance), and was based on an interim PRSP finalized in November 2000 and a Participatory Poverty Assessment (GoR 2002a). The latter included a national survey, pilot testing of a community action plan, and a policy relevance test. The first PRSP also built on *Vision 2020*, a document outlining Rwanda's economic aspirations published by the Ministry of Finance in 2000.[85]

The second poverty reduction strategy, the "Economic Development & Poverty Reduction Strategy 2008-2012" or the EDPRS, was finalized in 2007. The EDPRS focuses on three themes: Sustainable Growth for Jobs and Exports, Vision 2020 *Umurenge*, and governance.[86] The EDPRS builds on the previous poverty reduction strategy but focuses more on implementation, which was seen as lacking in Rwanda's first PRSP (GoR 2007e).

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[84] The full document is available at http://www.imf.org/External/NP/prsp/2002/rwa/01/063102.pdf.

[85] Vision 2020 sets out to transition Rwanda into a middle-income country based on free market principals and private investments. Key targets include increasing the per capita income from 290 USD to 900 USD, halving the poverty rate from 64% to 30%, and raising life expectancy by six years to fifty-five. Central to Vision 2020 is the move from subsistence agriculture to a knowledge-based society. Vision 2020 available at http://www.gesci.org/assets/files/Rwanda_Vision_2020.pdf.

[86] Sustainable Growth for Jobs and Exports is a public investment program whose goal is to reduce the operating costs of business, increase innovation, and widen and strengthen the financial sector. Vision 2020 *Umurenge* is supposed to accelerating the poverty reduction rate by promoting the pro-poor elements of the national growth plan; the goal is to increase the productive capacity of the rural poor though a combination of public works, cooperatives, credit packages and direct support. The final flagship, governance, is supposed to anchor pro-poor growth by building on a reputation for low levels of corruption and its comparative regional advantage in soft infrastructure (GoR 2007b, i).

According to the GoR, it will cost 5,151 billion Rwandan Francs (approximately $8.7 billion) over the FYs 2008-2012 to implement the EDPRS.[87] This figure includes public recurrent expenditure, public capital expenditure, and private investment, with the public component making up two-thirds or 3,434 billion Rwandan Francs (approximately $5.8 billion) (GoR 2007e). While all donors are, in theory, supposed to support the EDPRS and its priorities, budget support donors directly fund the EDPRS by funding GoR's budget. As a representative of the European Commission told me, they try to support the EDPRS not "impose from above" (Interview I-XI, 11.04.09).

Numbers and figures

Figure 5.2 below provides an overview of general budget support to Rwanda from 2003-2008, as reported in the SPA budget support alignment surveys.[88] As the chart shows, since 2005, over $150 million per year has been distributed to Rwanda in the form of general budget support ($185.83 million in FY2007/08). Over the years, budget support appears have become more predictable, with almost 100% of committed funds being disbursed in 2008.

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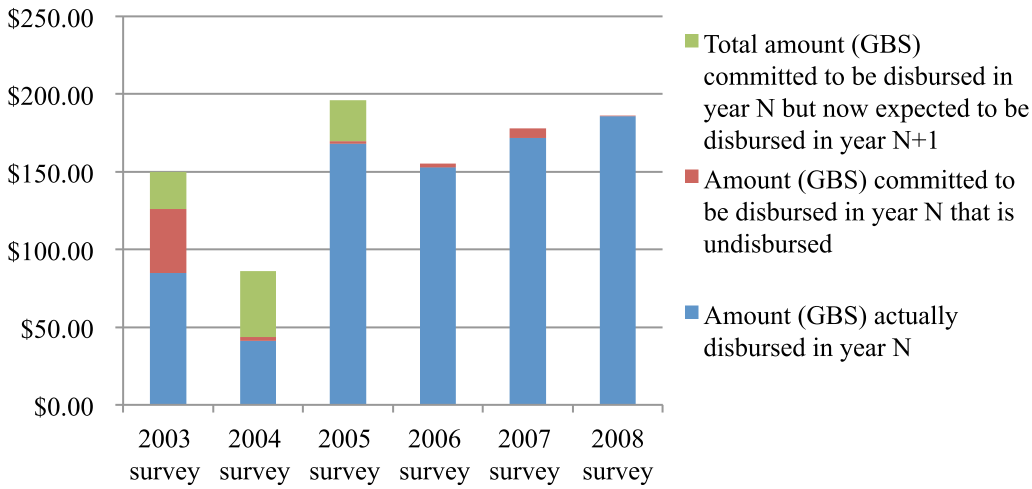
[87] US dollar amounts calculated on February 1, 2011 using the current exchange rate ($1 = 592 Rwandan Francs).
[88] The surveys stopped in 2008.

Figure 5.2: General Budget Support to Rwanda, 2003-2008 (in USD million)



Source: Strategic Partnership for Africa Budget Support Alignment Survey

General budget support further increased during FYs 2009/2010 and 2010/2011. The budget support packaged for 2010/2011 increased pledges by 21% to $335.4 million (Kagire 2009).[89] Figures for sector budget support to Rwanda are incomplete and not worth repeating here. However, the amount of sector budget support has quadrupled since 2007, and certain sectors, such as education, agriculture, and health, are more supported by budget support than others (GoR 2010d).

Proportionally, Rwanda receives more budget support than any other country in the SPA Budget Support Alignment Survey (which surveys the countries receiving the highest amounts of budget support in Sub-Saharan Africa). As table 5.1 below indicates, the largest

[89] In 2009, Rwanda changed its budget cycle when it entered the East African Community.

recipient of general budget support in Sub-Saharan Africa is Tanzania. However, when the relative size of each country's economy is taken into account, we see that general budget support actually constitutes a larger percentage of Rwanda's GDP than it does in Tanzania or any other country in the survey.

Table 5.1: General Budget Support Disbursal Rates by County

	2004 Survey		**2006 Survey**		**2008 Survey**		
	GBS Disbursed (US$m)	*GBS as % of GDP*	*GBS Disbursed (US$m)*	*GBS as % of GDP*	*GBS Disbursed (US$m)*	*GBS as % of GDP*	*Average GBS as % of GDP*
Benin	10.92	0.53%	72.06	1.61%	112.27	0.76%	1.06%
Burkina Faso	131.55	2.65%	186.44	3.10%	236.31	3.50%	3.12%
Ethiopia	193.48	2.41%	264.66	0.12%			2.06%
Ghana	301.69	3.69%	331.54	3.44%	306.71	2.04%	3.24%
Kenya			60.83	0.70%			0.35%
Madagascar	103.72	1.73%	113.41	2.62%			2.25%
Malawi	103.08	3.12%	120.82	4.14%	99.73	2.32%	3.08%
Mali	255.98	4.34%	110.51	2.00%	108.65	1.44%	2.26%
Mozambique	230.88	4.57%	317.33	4.88%	294.97	3.71%	4.84%
Rwanda	**86.17**	**2.37%**	**155.09**	**6.47%**	**186.1**	**5.55%**	**5.80%**
Sierra Leone	52.26	5.18%	64.08	6.97%	28.93	0.66%	4.93%
Tanzania	580.38	3.47%	548.13	3.82%	653.4	3.76%	3.78%
Uganda	404.07	4.93%	346.65	2.73%			3.75%
Zambia			86.42	1.41%	194.13	1.58%	2.56%

Source: Strategic Partnership for Africa Budget Support Alignment Surveys

Budget support donors

The GoR has a clear and stated preference for direct budget support. In 2010, the GoR declared that, "Rwanda's country systems are sufficiently solid and reliable for use by Development Partners funds." Therefore, "*Use of country systems and choice of modality in the Rwandan context is thus no longer principally dependent on technical improvements but rather is subject to political decisions and legal constraints by Development Partners*" (GoR 2010c, 2: emphasis in original). Despite the GoR's decree, only a few donors provide substantial amounts of budget support to Rwanda. During the FY 2010/11, the World Bank pledged $91 million, the EC $80.5 million, the UK $63.1 million, the AfDB $27.6 million, Germany $15.2 million, Netherlands $14.4 million, and Belgium $4.3 million (Kagire 2009).

As these figures make clear, there are four major budget support donors in Rwanda: the United Kingdom (UK), the European Commission (EC), the World Bank, and the African Development Bank (AfDB). The UK was an early budget support donor due to a close relationship between a former UK Minister of International Development, Clare Short, and the Rwandan President Paul Kagame. When DFID began budget support in the early 2000s, there were no public financial management structures in Rwanda. Therefore, the UK was taking a huge leap of faith by providing budget support to the GoR (Interview I-XI, 11.04.09).

In the late 2000s, the World Bank and the EC emerged as Rwanda's top budget support donors. Between 2008 and FY 2009/10 both the World Bank and the European Commission dramatically increased the percentage of their total aid package provided as budget support. While budget support constituted 23% of the EC's total aid package in 2008, budget support was 70% in FY 2009/2010. Similarly, World Bank budget support grew from 37% in 2008 to 83% in FY 2009/10 (GoR 2010d).

Three bilaterals also provide smaller levels of budget support to Rwanda. Belgium and the Netherlands only provide sector budget support, and Germany just recently began budget support in Rwanda. The Dutch were supposed to begin general budget support in 2008; the money was even ready to be transferred. However, they suspended general budget support to Rwanda due to Rwandan military activity in the Eastern Kivu region of the DRC and other governance concerns (Interview II-XII, 06.17.10). Stockholm also suspended

Swedish budget support in 2008 after a UN report accused the GoR of supporting armed rebellion in the DRC (Swedish Government Offices 2008).[90]

Both the United States and Canada are exploring the idea of providing sector budget support to agriculture to Rwanda (Interview I-XXI, 11.16.09; Interview II-VIII, 06.09.10). According to a USAID official, they want to provide budget support and think it would be good to do so. Therefore, they have told the government that they will explore whether or not Rwanda meets the legal requirements (Interview II-VIII, 06.09.10).[91] However, there is little indication on when budget support could begin, even if it is deemed legally permissible.

The Budget Support Harmonisation Group

Budget support in Rwanda is currently overseen by the Budget Support Harmonisation Group (BSHG); a working group of the Development Partners Coordination Group (see chapter six, pg. 121). Members of the Development Partners Coordination Group (which is open to all donors) that provide more than $10 million each year in budget support are eligible for membership in the BSHG. The exception to this rule is the IMF, which is considered a full member because of its role and mandate regarding macro-economic policy issues. Additionally, those giving less can participate in the group as an observer (BSHG 2008).[92] For example, the US was recently invited to sit in on BSHG meetings because of its interest in providing sector budget support to agriculture (Interview II-VIII, 06.09.10).[93]

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[90] One interviewee (a representative of a budget support donor) argued that the global trend toward collaboration and partnerships is being complicated by "knee-jerk reactions," such as withdrawing budget support (Interview I-XI, 11.04.09).
[91] However, they would have to provide more than $10m in budget support to have voting power on the BSHG.
[92] The United Nations Resident Coordinator also has observer status. Additionally, those considering budget support are often invited to observe.
[93] However, they would have to provide more than $10m in budget support to have voting power on the BSHG.

According to its terms of reference, the BSHG is a forum, not a technical working group. Its objective is "to create a common understanding of achievements by and performance changes for all budget support partners; to provide a forum for open discussion and to reduce the transactions cost of budget support" (BSHG 2006b, 1). The BSHG is chaired by the Secretary General and Secretary to the Treasury of the Ministry of Finance, and donors alternate co-chairing the group every six months.

Signatories of the BSHG's memorandum of understanding, commit to "enhancing national ownership and domestic accountability," giving the GoR leadership in this process and committing to strengthening the GoR's capacity to exercise leadership (BSHG 2008, 4). Additionally, signatories "agree to ensure that assistance is channeled in a manner that responds to the priorities articulated in national places, and making maximum use of government systems…" (BSHG 2008, 4). However, the memorandum of understanding very explicitly states that it does not supersede bilateral negotiations or treaties.

Twice a year, the BSHG conducts a review of budget support. These reviews are multi-day events and assess Rwanda's overall progress, as well as its progress in the economic, social and governance clusters. The November review is an assessment, while the review that takes place in April is forward looking (Interview II-V, 06.05.10).

During these reviews, the GoR reports to donors using the established Common Performance Assessment Framework (CPAF). The CPAF is a set of fifty indicators based on Rwanda's second poverty reduction strategy paper, the EDPRS. These fifty indicators were agreed on by donors and the GoR and are supposed to be used by donors as triggers to disburse budget support. For example, the UK distributes budget support in both fixed and variable payments or "tranches." The CPAF triggers disbursement of the variable tranche

(Interview II-X, 06.10.10).[94] The idea is that the donor can choose from a set of triggers that the government is aware of and has consented to. The CPAF process has struggled with capacity challenges and it is time consuming. However, overall, my interviewees were generally positive about the framework and the review process.[95]

Recently, a parallel assessment mechanism was established for donors, the Donor Performance Assessment Framework (DPAF). The DPAF assesses donors on thirty-two indicators.[96] However, unlike the CPAF, the DPAF is not tied to aid disbursement. The idea for the DPAF came from Mozambique, while the CPAF was a government initiative (Interview II-I, 06.01.10).

5.3. Findings

Poverty reduction strategies and budget support are hypothesized to allow recipient countries to be able to exercise more control over the way aid is allocated by getting rid of top-down conditionalities and stand-alone projects. At a simplistic level, they accomplish this goal. Poverty reduction strategies are "owned" by the national government, and once budget support has been transferred to the GoR, it is technically at the discretion of the government.

However, my review of the poverty reduction strategy process and budget support in Rwanda highlights three findings that directly challenge the predictions of the ownership model outlined in chapters two and three. First, I find that donors are now more likely to use

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[94] If all CPAF triggers were low, it would say something about the GoR's commitment and also affect the fixed trench (Interview II-X, 06.10.10).

[95] For example, one interviewee told me that the reviews can be a big burden and come with their own transaction costs. However, he seem to see value in the CPAF overall. He noted that, although the report quality is low, this is recognized and is being worked on (Interview II-XII, 06.18.10). Another interviewee told me that when budget support started it was very disorganized. However, it is much better now, as things are more structured and the ministries are better prepared (Interview II-XX, 06.29.10).

[96] Twenty-six of these indicators apply to all donors. The remaining eight only apply to budget support donors. Baseline data for the DPAF was collected in 2007 and reviews took place in 2008 and 2009/10.

national systems; however, there is little reason to believe that they give preference to government priorities if they are not in line with their own. Second, I find that, rather than decreasing the role of donors in the policy process, participation in budget support increases a donor's say over development policy. Third, I find that the Rwandan poverty reduction strategy process and budget support have not made the policy process more inclusive or increased domestic accountability, but have instead centralized domestic authority in the Ministry of Finance.

Use of national systems and priorities

Table 5.2 uses data from the aforementioned donor performance assessment framework (DPAF) to compare how often non-budget support donors and budget support donors use national systems. The table shows that both groups have increasingly used national systems since 2007 (the first year of the DPAF). However, budget support donors use national systems much more often and both groups still use Parallel Implementation Units (PIUs) quite often.[97] There is no guarantee increases in the use of national systems are due to budget support or the poverty reduction strategy; however, the figures do suggest that recent efforts to increase the use of national systems through aid programs like budget support have led to increases in the use of national systems.

Table 5.2: Donor Performance Assessment Results

	% of ODA disbursed:	Non- Budget Support Donors*			Budget Support Donors**		
		2007	2008	2009/10	2007	2008	2009/10
B1	in the context of a Programme-Based Approach	10.2%	7.4%	19.7%	43.4%	40.8%	78.0%

[97] The OECD defines PIUs as "dedicated management units designed to support the implementation and administration of projects or programmes" (OECD 2011).

B2	using GoR budget execution procedures	8.2%	0.6%	10.0%	49.9%	49.3%	61.7%
B3	using GoR auditing procedures	10.8%	4.6%	36.7%	52.8%	42.4%	62.9%
B4	using GoR financial reporting systems	10.8%	3.4%	39.9%	54.8%	49.1%	71.3%
B5	using GoR procurements systems	14.8%	15.2%	50.0%	57.6%	52.0%	80.9%
B6	Number of parallel PIUs	19	14	9	22	4	22
B7	% of TC provided through coordinated programmes	59.4%	85%	72.6%	62.6%	68.3%	83.3%

Compiled from 2009/2010 DPAF (GoR 2010b)
**the number of budget support donors was eight in 2007 and 2008 and seven in 2009/10*
***the number of non-budget support donors was five in 2007 and 2008 and seven in 2009/10*

Does the increased use of national systems mean national priorities are more reflected in national policy? Not necessarily. By most accounts, budget support in Rwanda is well aligned with the EDPRS. However, given that the EDPRS is a requirement of donors under the HIPC program and was produced in heavy collaboration with donors, there is clear reason to contest the EDPRS's billing as a "homegrown" document representing national priorities.

As noted, the poverty reduction strategy program came out of the HIPC program, which provides substantial debt relief to participating countries. To qualify for HIPC, the boards of both the World Bank and the IMF must endorse a country's poverty reduction strategy. Under the HIPC program, Rwanda received over $1,226.6 million in debt relief from the AfDB, World Bank, and IMF (AfDB 2005). Therefore, producing a poverty reduction strategy that will be approved by the IMF and World Bank boards is clearly advantageous to the GoR. Additionally, a country's progress on its PRSP is reviewed each year by the staff of the IMF and World Bank.[98]

Furthermore, there are clear guidelines for how PRSPs should be drafted,[99] and donors are often heavily involved in the drafting process. This was certainly true with the EDPRS.[100] At a high-level meeting between donors and the GoR in 2007, the Secretary General of the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning noted "that the EDPRS was developed through an extensive 18-month consultation, led at a high-level by GoR and involving all major stakeholders in 19 sector working groups and cross-cutting issue groups" (GoR 2007d, 8). During my interviews, both GoR and donor representatives further clarified that, although Rwanda's PRSP was "government-driven," it was produced by all stakeholders (Interview II-I, 06.01.10). In other words, donors were actively involved in its creation. One donor representative went as far as to say it was "signed off" by donors (Interview II-X, 06.10.10).

The drafting of the EDPRS was officially overseen by the EDPRS National Policy Steering Group, a body composed of GoR ministers (and chaired by the minister of finance). However, the Technical Steering Group – which was composed of GoR representatives and donor representatives from the World Bank, UNDP, EC, and DFID – actually monitored and

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[98] Each year a progress report is produced, and the IMF and World Bank assess these progress reports in a "Joint Staff Advisory Note." Guidelines for preparing these notes can be found at http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTPRS1/Resources/PDFs/jsan_apr_guidelines.pdf.

[99] For example, the "PRSP Sourcebook" guides countries in developing and strengthening their poverty reduction strategies. The sourcebook is available at http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/TOPICS/EXTPOVERTY/EXTPRS/0,,contentMDK:20175742~pagePK:210058~piPK:210062~theSitePK:384201,00.html.

[100] Hayman noted similar dynamics in the drafting of the first PRSP. She suggests that it was DFID that really pushed for the PRSP process to begin with, as they needed for budget support, and that the PRSP was not accepted by all parts of the government (Hayman 2006, 168). Additional, she notes that, although the Poverty Reduction Strategy Credit programme, the World Bank's mechanism for funding the PRSP, should have been drawn from PRSP sector strategies, the World Bank was largely responsible for preparing the strategies (due to low capacity and a desire to put Rwanda's PRSC programme before the board in June 2004 (Hayman 2006, 71).

oversaw the consultation process and drafting (GoR 2006a, 5).[101] Additionally, donors were active in the eleven sector working groups that designed the actual EDPRS policies and interventions.

Furthermore, international consultants heavily supported the drafting of the EDPRS. Two international consultants supported the Ministry of Finance with drafting for approximately two years, and an international consultant supported each sector (Informal Conversations: Kigali, 06.15.10; GoR 2006b). The use of international consultants is largely justified by low ministry capacity. Additionally, consultants often lend a degree of credibility to the process. International consultants are not supposed to represent donors; however, their paycheck and future jobs are dependent on donors. Their active participation in the drafting of the EDPRS indicates that international ideas and notions about how best to foster economic development often heavily guide national priorities.

The active and influential role of donors in the EDPRS process does not mean that the document does not reflect national priorities (at least to some degree). However, it does suggest that national priorities cannot be assumed to have taken precedence during its drafting. During my interviews with donor and government officials, I did not come across any examples of government preferences taking precedence over donor preferences. Instead, what was conveyed to me was a spirit of collaboration between donors and the GoR. As Hayman writes:

> In Rwanda, the policy process consequently involves the government putting forward its agenda, which already reflects what donors want to see to a great extent, and then a process of negotiation ensues with donors requesting particular amendments to satisfy their needs (2009, 594).

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[101] Civil society and the private sector also had very minimal representation.

As long as donors and the GoR are in agreement about what their national development policy should be, their poverty reduction strategies are likely reflective of national priorities. However, if GoR priorities deviate from donor priorities, there is little indication that they will take precedence over donor priorities.

Increased influence of budget support donors

Furthermore, my interviews and observations in Rwanda suggest that, rather than decrease the role of donors in the policy process, participation in budget support actually increases a donor's involvement in development policy. As one interviewee explained to me, budget support donors can monitor and evaluate more. They are involved with the budget. They know more what is going on and can better understand the context and people (Interview II-XV, 06.23.10).

A review of the meeting minutes of the BHSG reveals that donors who participate in this group are very active in technical aspects of the GoR's operations. For example, when the budget was presented to the BSHG during its June 2006 meeting, donors made comments about how to best "mop up excess liquidity," the need to have a clear picture of revenue collection potential, and concerns about food distribution as a means to address a food shortage (BSHG 2006a). When the education sector budget was presented at the January 2007 meeting, donors raised concerns about how performance contracts for teachers were being used (BSHG 2007), and, at the fall 2009 Joint Budget Support Review, I observed that donors were part and parcel of the policy process, asking very specific and technical questions about the GoR's operations and activities. Each of these presentations occurred *before* the budget was presented to parliament for comment or review.

During my interviews, donors and GoR officials appeared to be well aware that budget support donors possessed heightened access. One highly ranked GoR official argued that with project funding everything is defined. However, he suggested that when a donor participates in budget support they are able to ask the "big questions," such as what is the impact of all of your poverty programs? (Interview I-XX, 11.13.09). A representative of DFID argued that the US is often left out, as they are so tied to contracts and therefore have less impact, particularly on the policy dialogue (Interview I-XII, 11.04.09).

A representative of UNDP told me that it is true that budget support donors have privileged access to information (Interview II-XX, 06.29.10). Additionally, a senior GoR official in the Ministry of Finance told me directly that budget support donors get more information than other donors, can make sure that their resources are being used well, and can "influence policy." Because budget support donors come to the (CPAF) reviews, they know what is happening in all sectors, instead of just the few sectors where they have projects (Interview II-V, 06.05.10).[102] A DFID representative put it more directly, telling me "*we do what we want*" (Interview II-X, 06.10.10; my emphasis).

I also observed that non-budget support donors are well aware of the privileged position budget support donors are given. A representative of the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) lamented at their inability to give budget support (Interview II-XVII, 06.24.10).[103] A sector budget support donor noted inequalities between donors, telling me that, even though they give *sector* budget support, the government likes to make them

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[102] He went on to tell me that development partners are a check for the government and help them strengthen their systems.

[103] One way that Japan has gotten around their inability to provide budget support is the Counterpart Fund. This aid project distributed fuel to the GoR. The GoR in turn was able to sell the fuel and use the revenue to fund the government (Interview II-XVIII, 06.24.10).

feel like they are not a part of things because they do not provide *general* budget support. The same donor representative went on to tell me that there is a big different between how donors and recipient-countries perceive the Paris Agenda. Recipient-countries thought it would garner them more control. However, when you are a budget support donor there is a need to discuss everything. You get access to everything (Interview II-XII, 06.18.10).

While donors have largely moved away from hard conditionalities, my case study of budget support and the poverty reduction strategy process in Rwanda suggests that donor influence has not decreased. Instead, donors have merely shifted how they exert influence. Instead of making heavy demands upfront, donors have further integrated themselves into decision-making processes and become active participants in what is often called the "policy dialogue." Consequently, donors exert influence in subtler but equally (if not more) powerful ways by becoming part and parcel of state decision-making structures.[104] This is much easier to do if you are a general budget support donor, because you are given privileged access to information and are invited to give your input on state practices.

Increased authority of MINECOFIN

Lastly, I find that the Rwandan poverty reduction strategy process and budget support have not made the policy process more inclusive, nor increased domestic accountability, but have instead centralized authority in the Ministry of Finance. The Ministry of Finance manages both budget support and the EDPRS. As budget support has grown more and more prevalent, the Ministry of Finance has grown more and more powerful. This has come at a cost to other actors.

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[104] As one interviewee put it, everything is in the dialogue (Interview II-XII, 06.18.10).

Recently, civil society has been invited to participate in various high-level meetings between the government and donors (see chapter five for more details). Additionally, a more user-friendly budget was recently created, and the Ministry of Finance did present the last budget to civil society (Interview I-XVI, 11.10.09; Interview II-XXII, 07.02.10). However, your average Rwandan citizen continues to have very little control over development policy or budgetary processes.

Key reports, such as the CPAF, are only presented to donors, not to the parliament (Interview II-XII, 06.18.10). Therefore, parliamentarians do not have the opportunity to comment on indicators used for the CPAF or its findings. On the 2010 Open Budget Index, Rwanda received a score of 11 out of 100. This score indicates that the GoR "provides the public with scant information on the central government's budget and financial activities assessed by the Survey," making "it virtually impossible for citizens to hold the government accountable for its management of the public's money" (Open Budget Partnership 2010, 1).

Budget support, in particular, excludes civil society. Civil society does not have representation in the BSHG, and when funds are channeled through budget support instead of through projects, their role as an implementer is cut off. The executive director of the Rwandan Civil Society Platform worries about this, telling me that the government's push for budget support leaves civil society vulnerable (Interview II-III, 06.03.10). A 2006 report on budget support in Rwanda found that budget support has resulted in "government empowerment," particularly of the Ministry of Finance, but had done little to foster domestic accountability. The report notes that "the feedback process is not very inclusive," with line ministers and other domestic stakeholders not being fully engaged (IDD and Associates 2006, 89).

The reasons for a lack of citizen engagement are not entirely clear. A representative of the European Commission told me that most local NGOs are not interested in monitoring. The EC tried to get local NGOs to monitor the EDPRS but could not get any to agree to such oversight. While my interviewee was not sure if NGOs are fearful or just not interested in monitoring (or both), she noted that what is clear is that the government is very strong and civil society is very weak (Interview I-XVIII, 01.13.09).

In contexts such as Rwanda, where the state is strong and civil society weak, there appears to be little reason to predict that aid programs that *further* centralize authority will translate into increased citizen influence. The hypothesis that budget support increases domestic accountability requires a pre-existing open political landscape, where civil society and parliament already play an active role in keeping the central government in check. When this does not already exist, as in Rwanda, there is little reason to believe that the poverty reduction strategy process or budget support will do anything to make the policy process more inclusive or to close the broken feedback loop in foreign assistance.

5.4. Summary of Findings

In this chapter, I examined two related aid programs introduced in Rwanda in the early 2000s. Collectively, budget support and poverty reduction strategies are theorized to promote higher-levels of recipient-country ownership. However, in this chapter I have argued the following: (1) Although donors are now more likely to use national systems, there is little reason to believe that donors give preference to government priorities, if they are not in line with their own; (2) Rather than decrease the role of donors in the policy process, participation in budget support likely *increases* a donor's involvement in decision-making processes regarding development policy; and (3) The poverty reduction strategy program and budget support have not made the policy process more inclusive or increased domestic accountability in Rwanda. Instead, they centralize domestic authority in the ministry of finance. Table 5.3 below outlines how these three findings map on to the variables of interest in this study.

Table 5.3: Summary of Findings

	Government Policymakers	**Donors**	**Citizens**
Changes in influence over *development policy*:	The Ministry of Finance has gained more influence but is still constrained by donor preferences.	Donors remain very influential and active in development policy	Citizen influence over development policy decisions remains low.

Regarding government policymakers, I find that the influence of government policymakers has increased. *However*, influence has been limited to the Ministry of Finance (in close collaboration with the president's office). Alternative domestic actors, such as parliament, line ministers, and civil society have not seen their influence increase. As a result, citizen influence over development policy remains very low. Additionally, there is little evidence that, if the government preferences conflict strongly with donor preferences, government preferences will take precedence. Regarding economic issues, donors and the government appear to act in relative congruence.

Furthermore, greater influence by the Ministry of Finance has not translated into less influence by donors. Donors active in budget support and the poverty reduction strategy process, such as the EC, the UK, and the World Bank, have not become shrinking violets. Instead, they have merely changed how they exert influence, engaging more heavily with the "policy dialogue" and in technical matters. This type of influence is perhaps less outwardly antagonistic, but it does not decrease donor influence over development policy. In fact, it likely makes it greater. By actively participating in budget support and the poverty reduction strategy process, certain donors have only become further integrated into domestic decision making structures. Far from eliminating the government's dependence on donors, links between the GoR and budget support donors have become stronger.

Chapter 6
The Aid Coordination, Harmonization, & Alignment Framework

In this chapter, I turn my attention to Rwanda's aid coordination, harmonization, and alignment (ACHA) framework.[105] The wide-reaching ACHA framework is an attempt by the GoR and its donors to localize the Paris Declaration in Rwanda. The objective is to enable more country ownership through increased coordination, harmonization, and alignment. According to an overview of the ACHA framework:

> Aid effectiveness is at the center of today's development discourse. Over one hundred donors and developing countries, including Rwanda, signed the **Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness**. In doing so, they agreed to measure their success at making aid more efficient with a set of indicators and targets. Donors and recipient countries now have a practical blueprint to advance development, enhance aid effectiveness, and monitor progress. Inherent to the Paris Declaration is the principal of country ownership. The **Government of Rwanda** and its **Development Partners** are devoted to implementing global commitments through their **ACHA** framework and within Rwanda's national policies and strategies (GoR n.d.: emphasis in original).

Ownership is at the core of the Paris Declaration's agenda for improved aid effectiveness. However, additional elements – such as coordination, alignment, and harmonization – provide the foundation for ownership (see figure 2.2, pg. 25). If donors do not harmonize and align their activities with national systems and priorities, it is difficult for a recipient-country

[105] At one time, ACHA was the name of standing working group in Rwanda. In this chapter, I use the name to represent all actions taken by donors and the GoR to manage aid in accordance with the Paris Declaration not the defunct working group.

to take charge of its own development policy. Similarly, if donors remain fragmented, advancing a singular agenda led by the recipient-country is difficult. Therefore, since the early 2000s, the GoR and its donors have been developing a series of forums and policy procedures to realize the three principals of coordination, harmonization, and alignment in Rwanda (see table 6.1). In the following case study, I examine the various components of the ACHA framework, looking for evidence of increased ownership.

Table 6.1: Definition of Terms

Term	Definition
Coordination	"sharing information, lowering transaction costs, and avoiding duplication efforts"
Harmonization	"streamlining and simplification of development partner's procedures and practices"
Alignment	"the assurance that assistance is given in accordance with the GoR's priorities and adopted to the Rwandan context"

Source: Secretary General of MINECOFIN, Gatete Claver (GoR 2004, 25)

To do so, I first look for evidence that the ACHA framework has increased coordination, harmonization, and alignment in Rwanda. For example, I look for evidence that donors are sharing more information with each other and working together to implement aid projects. I also look for evidence that donors are sharing information with the GoR and working towards goals and within parameters set by the government. I do find some evidence to suggest that coordination, harmonization, and alignment have increased in Rwanda. However, there is great variation between donors. Additionally, bilateral agreements still take precedence, and partnerships primarily occur when it is advantageous for donors.

I then look for evidence that the ACHA framework has resulted in increased government influence, increased citizen influence, and decreased donor influence. Just as with budget support and the poverty reduction strategy process, I find that, although government influence has increased as a result of the ACHA framework, this influence has been limited to the Ministry of Finance and has not spread to other domestic actors. Additionally, donors have not receded into the background, but have maintained a great deal of influence over aid policy in Rwanda.

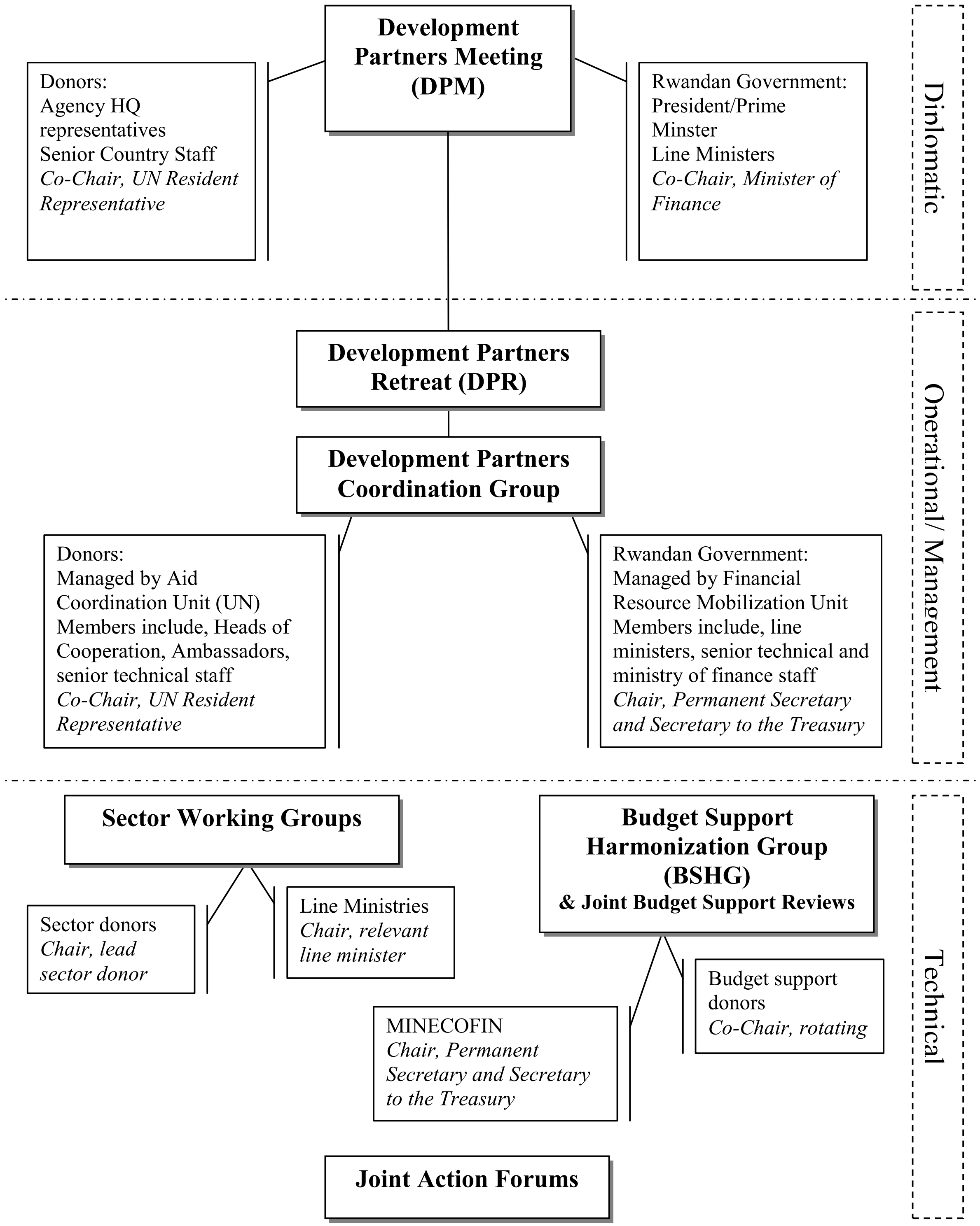
The chapter is organized into five major sections. I first provide a summary of Rwanda's aid architecture and aid policy. Second, I discuss the multiple high-level forums and meetings that take place between donors and the GoR each year. Third, I outline the complicated system of sector and working groups in Rwanda. In this section, I discuss the health sector and the new Division of Labour, which limits donors to participation in three sectors. Fourth, I briefly summarize the new Joint Action Forums, which attempt to formalize relations between donors and the government at the local level.

In the final section, I pull together each of the pieces of the ACHA framework analyzed by listing the commonalities found across all, noting three core findings: (1) Despite a number of initiatives to limit their influence, donors remained active and influential in decision-making process about aid policy in Rwanda; (2) Donors' commitment to the idea of ownership varies; and, (3) Domestically, the Ministry of Finance dominates the ACHA framework. I conclude by summarizing how my findings from this case study map on to the variables of interest in this study.

6.1. Rwanda's Aid Architecture and Aid Policy

The emphasis on aid coordination, harmonization, and alignment really began to take off in Rwanda between 2002 and 2004 (Hayman 2009a). Since then, a complicated aid system has emerged (see figure 6.1). Some components of the system, such as the Budget Support Harmonization Group (BSHG), were previously discussed, as they relate directly to budget support.

*Figure 6.1: Rwanda's Aid Architecture**



Adopted & Updated from Hayman (2006, 66)
**As of fall 2010*

Rwanda's aid architecture is composed of forums and working groups that operate at three different levels. At the diplomatic level, very senior donor and government representatives come together in a formal annual meeting. Attendees include the Rwandan president, ambassadors, and senior donor representatives (who often fly in from donor headquarters for the occasion). Formal diplomatic visits between heads of state would also fall under this category. At the operational/management level, mid-level donor and government representatives meet frequently throughout the year to iron out the contours of the aid relationship in a less formal setting. Lastly, the nuts and bolts are typically decided at the technical level, where country-level, donor staff meet with government representatives on specific topics, such as health policy or budget support.

In 2006, the GoR approved an Aid Policy, which is arguably an "adoption of Paris principals, tailored to meet Rwanda's needs" (Rwangombwa 2006, slide 6).[106] The Aid Policy lays out twelve objectives related to the management of aid: operational development strategies, reliable country systems, alignment of aid flows on national strategies, strengthening of local capacities by coordinated support, use of country systems, avoiding parallel implementation units (PIUs), aid is more predictable, aid is untied, use of common arrangements, joint missions and analysis, results-oriented frameworks, and mutual accountability (GoR 2006c). According to a representative of a major international NGO, the Aid Policy was a political statement by the GoR, and the chapters flow directly from Paris. It is not a joint assistance strategy (i.e., jointly approved by both the GoR and donors) but a government policy (Interview II-XX, 06.29.10).

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[106] In this chapter, I distinguish aid policy in general from the official Aid Policy by capitalizing the latter.

The Aid Policy makes clear that the GoR prefers un-earmarked budget support and articulates the GoR's intention to decline any offer of assistance that does not meet its standards.[107] It outlines the conditions under which the GoR will accept loans and technical assistance, and notes their concern with vertical funds (or funds delivered in structures parallel to the government). In addition, the Aid Policy expresses the need for more information about NGOs' activities as a requirement for better aid management (GoR 2006c).

At first glance, the Aid Policy seems to be the epitome of national ownership. However, a deeper investigation complicates the story. First, similar to Rwanda's second poverty reduction strategy (the EDPRS), it was produced with substantial input from donors. A handout provided in a workshop on the development of an Aid Policy clarifies:

> …there will be a number of elements in the policy that have direct bearing on the work of the development partners and therefore the process of elaborating the strategy must be a consultative one. It is important that the policy is both effective and workable and both development partners and Government agencies should buy into the finding (GoR 2005a).

Prior to the drafting of the Aid Policy, donors were invited to give feedback on several documents, including a Baseline Survey on Donor Alignment and Harmonization in Rwanda and an Aid Policy Consultation Policy. There was also an extensive dialogue, including a four-day Aid Policy workshop (GoR 2006a). Donors themselves acknowledged their role in the process in November 2006, when they signed a Statement of Intent regarding both the Paris Declaration and the new Aid Policy. In this statement, donors recognized "…the transparent and participatory approach that was adopted in the elaboration of the Policy,

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[107] After un-earmarked budget support, the GoR favors sector budget support then stand-alone projects on budget and on plan (GoR 2006c).

allowing Development Partners to provide their views and feedback on the provisions of the document" ("Joint Donors' Statement" 2006).

While donors were involved in the process, there was limited input from domestic actors outside the executive branch. Although local government officials were included in Aid Policy discussions, meetings primarily sought to "sensitize" them (a popular word in Kigali) to the document, not get their feedback and opinions (GoR 2007e; Highton 2009). During a workshop for local officials, a senior Ministry of Finance official noted, "Implementing the Aid Policy at the district level means building the capacity of local government officials to work with donors to align their activities to national priorities and, where possible, to harmonize their support and reduce transaction costs" (GoR 2007c, 1). That is, the goal of implementing the Aid Policy at the district level is to align local governments with priorities *already* decided on by the national government and donors.

The process by which the Aid Policy was approved is also telling. Instead of being approved by the citizen-elected parliament, the Aid Policy (just like the Common Performance Assessment Framework) was approved by the Cabinet, which is appointed by the President. The decision to seek approval in this way was made by the Ministry of Finance, which then reportedly dismissed criticisms about the approval process (Interview II-XX, 06.29.10).[108]

Moreover, the Aid Policy gives the Ministry of Finance full authority over development assistance (GoR 2007a). Rather than donors negotiating aid packages with the relevant line ministries (e.g., the ministries of education or health), the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, or local governments, all aid negotiation is now supposed to go through the Ministry

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[108] MINECOFIN did reportedly face criticism for this decision. Their response to this criticism was the consultation process could not go one forever (Interview II-XX, 06.29.10).

of Finance. While the Ministry of Foreign Affairs still technically manages diplomatic relations, the Ministry of Finance is now in the lead (Interview II-XXI, 07.02.10).[109]

Technically, a high-level group of government officials oversees the Aid Policy (e.g., implementation and policy outcomes). However, according to a representative of the Ministry of Finance, this group does not meet very often. Instead, implementation falls to the members of the External Finance Unit in the Ministry of Finance. This unit is currently finalizing an Aid Policy implementation plan (Interview II-I, 06.01.10).

6.2. High-Level Forums

Development Partners Coordination Group and Development Partners Meetings & Retreats

The highest-level coordination meeting in Rwanda is the Development Partners Meeting or DPM (see figure 6.1). Annual DPMs grew out of UN Round Table meetings that took place in Europe immediately following the genocide. The first meeting on Rwandan soil took place in 2000 (Hayman 2006). The annual meeting brings together senior GoR officials (including the president) and high-level diplomats from donor countries.[110] The DPM is a diplomatic meeting, and the GoR uses it to drum up additional aid. Each year, the GoR picks a theme they would like to emphasize, and makes several presentations highlighting its socio-economic accomplishments. Each development partner is also permitted to make a statement.

At the organizational and management level, there is the Development Partners Coordination Group (DPCG) and the Development Partnership Retreat (DPR). The DPCG is an aid coordination forum composed of high-level GoR representatives (i.e. line ministers,

[109] GoR representatives did express concern about giving MINECOFIN so much authority at consultative meetings prior to the drafting of the aid policy (GoR 2005c).
[110] Even donors that do not have a ground presence in Rwanda but contribute aid via multilateral institutions sometimes attend DPM meetings.

Secretaries General, and directors of planning), ambassadors, heads of development corporations, and senior technical staff. The DPCG is a forum for political dialogue. It is not a technical working group, but a coordination forum for feelings and opinions (Interview II-XXI, 07.02.10).

The DPCG was set up immediately after the 2002 DPM and held its first meeting on November 18, 2002 (Hayman 2006). All donors with permanent representation in Rwanda can participate in the DPCG, but China and Korea choose not to attend meetings (Interview II-I, 06.01.10). The DPCG is co-chaired by the current Permanent Secretary and Secretary to the Treasury to the Ministry of Finance and the current UN Resident Coordinator. Presently, the DPCG meets quarterly.

In 2005, members of the DPCG began gathering in a retreat format. In contrast to the DPM, the now annual Development Partners Retreat (DPR) brings together country-level staff in a more intimate setting outside the capital city (typically on Lake Kivu in the northeast part on the country). In contrast to the 400+ persons who typically attend the Development Partners Meetings, approximately 100 GoR representatives and in-country donor staff attend the retreats. There is more space for discussions about particular policy issues and most discussions about aid coordination occur during the retreats.

Sessions at both the DPMs and DPRs are chaired by the relevant GoR line minister and co-chaired by a donor working heavily in the area or sector being discussed. Most sessions begin with a presentation by the GoR, followed by a response by a pre-selected development partner, and then the floor is opened up for questions. Not surprisingly, the GoR attempts to manage these discussions as much as possible, attempting to present the GoR in the best possible light.

Frequency of meetings and challenges to coordination

The frequency of DPCG meetings is highly variable. At one time, the DPCG met monthly. However, meeting frequency decreased to every other month in 2006 because of a request from the government (GoR 2006b), and then gradually decreased to quarterly over the following years. Now, even quarterly meetings do not always take place.[111] When asked why the DPCG meets less frequently than it once did, one GoR representative told me that there is simply less to discuss (Interview II-I, 06.01.10). This is likely a variable, as meetings recently increased after the GoR introduced a new initiative called the Division of Labour. However, there is also some indication that the DPCG's activities have decreased as budget support donors have increased their meetings and activities.

In a conversation about the role of the DPCG, a DFID staff member questioned how useful the DPCG is given that the Budget Support Harmonization Group (BSHG) now has nine members (Interview II-X, 06.10.10). Not surprisingly, in my interviews, non-budget support donors were much more inclined to see a clearer role for the DPCG, and representatives of the UN (the UN co-chairs the DPCG) were particularly enthusiastic about the importance of the body.

Concerns have also been raised about the current role of the DPM, which just recently became biennial. During the 2008 retreat, a working group discussed the role of both the DPM and DPCG, and concluded, "they should not simply be a forum for information sharing. Instead, one should have real policy dialogue. Furthermore, participants stated that they would like to be better prepared for the DPM" (DPCG 2008, 12).

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[111] In 2010, the DPCG met three times.

The latter concern is one raised by donors in multiple contexts, as the GoR often moves very quickly on reforms and required documentation is often distributed at the last minute. According to donors, this gives them very little time to prepare for major policy discussions.[112] As a representative of an international NGO noted, it is sometimes hard to decipher the motive for the GoR's quick pace.

In particular, my interviewee questioned whether or not the last minute distribution of important documents is because of poor planning or a political tactic of the government (Interview II-XXII, 07.02.10). In either case, the last minute nature of many policy actions has visibly impeded coordination between donors and the GoR in several circumstances. As another interviewee put it, the government works quickly and sometimes people get lost in the process (Interview II-IV, 06.05.10).

Additionally, it is important to clarify that neither the DPCG nor the DPMs/DPRs replace bilateral agreements or talks between donors and the GoR, rather they *add* to them. For example, even through they are in charge of the DPCG, the UN's bilateral relationship with the GoR has not changed (Interview II-XX, 06.29.10). Country strategies are still agreed on bilaterally with the GoR (the process for approval varies based on the donor), and donors still hold annual bilateral forums and discussions. Under the auspices of the European Union, many European donors have decreased (but certainly not eliminated) bilateral activities. However, this has more to do with European integration than the ACHA framework.

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[112] This concern was particularly evident at the 2005 DPM where both the EU and the US raised the issue in their donor statements (GoR 2005b, 65 & 70).

Participation of civil society

Even more apparent is the limited role that civil society has played in the DPCG, DPM, and DPR. High-level forums, both at the technical and organizational and management levels, are dominated by the national government and donor representatives. Civil society, NGOs (even large international NGOs), and local government have historically been excluded. As a representative of Norwegian People's Aid told me, the DPCG is for donors who fund the government, i.e. provide aid directly to the government through budget support or stand-alone projects. She went on to say that "development partners" are really the large bilateral and multilateral donors that fund the government, not smaller NGOs like themselves. As an international NGO, they lack the status, representation, and access that major bilateral and multilateral donors have (Interview II-XIX, 06.29.10).

As was noted in chapter three, the GoR has often expressed skepticism about civil society. This skepticism continued throughout the 2000s. In June 2004, a report by a parliamentary commission on genocidal ideology recommended the dissolution of several international and local NGOs that "preached genocidal ideology and ethnic hatred." According to Burnet, this list included the "only local human rights organization willing to criticize the government publicly and document human rights abuses committed by government authorities" (2007, 4). Most of these organizations shut down between July 2004 and January 2005, and the organizations that remain are careful about criticizing the government, the RPF, the president, or their policies.

In 2008, civil society was invited to participate in the DPM for the first time (Interview II-XXII, 07.02.10). Prior to the meeting, civil society came together to formulate a common statement that was read at the meeting. In this document, they called on the GoR and donors to:

> …recognize civil society as an independent development actor in its own right. Enhanced recognition of civil society and supporting CSOs to fulfill their roles in the development process will be instrumental in developing and further strengthening genuine partnership and good society-state relations (Rwanda Civil Society Platform 2008b, 2).

In the lead up to the common statement, it was concluded in a workshop attended by over 160 members of civil society, that civil society as a whole faces many challenges in Rwanda. These challenges include, "government perception of the Civil Society as a weak entity and hence not considering it to be an important partner…" and "the fact that Civil Society activities are to some extent donor driven, which hinders the independence and the sustainability of actions…" (Rwanda Civil Society Platform 2008a, 1).

The activities that occurred around the 2008 DPM were a high point for civil society, and the statement clearly articulates that some members of civil society would like the GoR and donors to take them more seriously. However, since 2008, little has fundamentally changed. While "civil society" now often attends high-level meetings, they lack a vote and participation is still constrained.[113]

Civil society is represented at most donor-government meetings by the executive director of the Rwandan Civil Society Platform, a group formed in 2004 for the purpose of dealing with the government (Gready 2011).[114] The Civil Society Platform represents umbrella groups, not individual NGOs. In total, fifteen umbrella groups are now members of the platform. These umbrella groups represent approximately 703 NGOs (Interview II-III,

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[113] At the 2010 DPM civil society once again called on the GoR "to put in place an enabling environment for meaningful engagement and for the voice of its citizens to be heard" (Rwanda Civil Society Platform and Network of International NGOs 2010, 2)

[114] International NGOs and the private sector also elect a representative to attend the DPCG meetings and other forums. The formation of the civil society platform began in 2004 but was not officially launched until 2006 and not fully operational until 2007 (Interview II-III, 06.03.10).

06.03.10).[115] Under this arrangement, one person must speak for hundreds of organizations, many of which are not even members of the platform and therefore lack a vote in representation.

Additionally, at the same time that civil society is being invited to sit at some tables, government control of their activities is increasing. All NGOs (local and international) are required to register all activities with a series of GoR institutions, ranging from the Ministry of Local Government, to the *utugari* or cell where they are working (Interview II-VI, 06.08.10; Interview II-XIV, 06.22.10).[116] The Law on Non-Profit Associations, enacted in 2001, gives the government the power to control projects, budgets, and the hiring of personnel. Additionally, it requires all organizations to obtain a renewable certificate of registration from the Ministry of Local Governance. Numerous organizations have reportedly encountered difficulties registering or renewing their registration.

During a meeting of the platform I observed, a government spokesperson reiterated these registration requirements to participants. He paid lip service to civil society independence, but then reiterated (in both English and Kinyarwanda) that there are guidelines and rules governing civil society organizations. He warned that some civil society organizations have been irresponsible and not followed these requirements, calling on all, “so that a few organizations don’t punish your overall image.”

One interviewee noted that what the government really wants to do is sensitize (again, this is a word I heard often in Rwanda) civil society to their agenda or mission; what they want is a single voice (Interview II-IV, 06.05.10). Channeling NGO activity through the

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[115] The platform has four main objectives: (1) forum for coordination; (2) information exchange; (3) represent others; (4) lobby and advocacy (Interview II-III, 06.03.10).
[116] The exact process for registering is rather oblique.

platform, which one donor suggested is (at the very least) pro-government, is certainly one way to do this. Another interviewee told me that much of government work is about sensitization and conformity in government; the idea of uniformity is untouchable. (Interview I-VII, 10.30.09). Yet another interviewee, noted that civil society is often about two things: keeping government accountable and keeping themselves accountable. The first is very hard to do in Rwanda, but the government is very interested in the latter (Interview II-XXII, 07.02.10).

In order for NGOs to be heard, another interviewee told me, it is necessary for them to partner with one another. They are, therefore, learning to speak with one voice (Interview I-XVI, 11.10.09). This approach is likely to be the best way of gaining access to the high-level forums and meetings currently controlled and dominated by the GoR and its "development partners." However, such a role is far from the commonly held idea of civil society as a group of diverse agitators, challenging the status quo from a variety of different perspectives.

Additionally, centralizing authority and voice makes it easier for the government to infiltrate civil society. According to Gready, umbrella structures and the platforms "are widely perceived to have been co-opted by the current government. Hierarchical in organizational culture, many are led by people that act as mouthpiece of the government" (2011, 90). Government is so pervasive within civil society that NGOs are jokingly said to stand for the "Next Governmental Official" (Interview I-XVI, 11.10.09).

6.3. Clusters and Sector Working Groups

Underneath the Development Partners Coordination Group umbrella, there is a complicated set of clusters, sector working groups, and sector wide approaches (SWAPs).

These meeting groups have undergone several reforms over the years, and it is almost impossible to get a clear picture of their current state. They are always changing, and coordination structures are sector-specific. However, much of the nitty-gritty of policy work occurs in the sectors, making them an important part of Rwanda's coordination structure.

Sector activities in Rwanda are organized into three clusters: economic, governance, and social (Interview II-V, 06.05.10). Within the clusters are sector working groups, where the majority of the work is done.[117] The names and labels of the sector working groups have undergone many changes over the years, but, according to the latest chart of donor activities by sector, there are currently fifteen active sectors. Depending on whom you ask, these sectors are supposed to be aligned with either the budget or Rwanda's Economic and Poverty Reduction Strategy (both of which are also supposed to be aligned with one another) (Interview II-II, 06.01.10; Interview II-V, 06.05.10). Each sector is chaired by a line minster and co-chaired by a lead development partner, and sectors rotate reporting to the DPCG during its quarterly meetings.

Each of the sector working groups is organized differently, with some being well-coordinated and others more loosely organized. Additionally, some meet more frequently than others.[118] In an annual ODA report, the GoR notes that the justice, decentralisation, and agriculture sectors are particularly harmonized (GoR 2010d). Additionally, the education sector is often heralded as a model of coordination. There is an education partnership agreement, and, as early as 2003, the sector had joint reviews and a sector strategy plan

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[117] Sectors use to be called clusters. Therefore, the terminology often gets very muddled.
[118] For example, the governance sector meets about once a quarter (Interview I-VI, 10.30.09).

(Hayman 2006).[119] Additionally, the education sector was the first to implement a Sector Wide Approach or SWAP. From the government's perspective, each sector should have a SWAP, as SWAPs are thought to align the sectors, organize priorities, and pool funds and objectives (Interview II-I, 06.01.10).

Spotlight on the health sector

The health sector has the largest number of active donors, and receives the most ODA of any of the sectors.[120] The US provides the most money to health (largely because of PEPFAR or the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief). However, Belgium has taken on the role of as lead donor because of its lengthy involvement in the sector and an aid portfolio that includes sector budget support to health.

Belgium, as lead donor, holds the Secretariat seat and is responsible for the sector's agenda. To distribute this burden amongst donors, they introduced a health "Development Partners Group" in November 2008. The group meets every two months and has a rotating chair. During these meetings, donors set the agenda for the next sector meeting (Interview II-XIII, 06.18.10). Both the chair (GoR) and the co-chair (donor) must sign the sector working group reports; therefore, they must agree on the contexts (Interview II-V, 06.05.10).[121]

Coordinating donors in the health sector has not always been easy. The sector is composed of a plethora of working and technical groups, which function at varying levels of efficiency. There are currently six working groups, which then sprout out into around thirty-

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[119] The justice; health and population; and transport and ICT sectors also have Joint Sector Reviews (GoR 2010d).
[120] The health sector is technically called the Health Coordination Group, because they were originally a cluster and already had a terms of reference when sector system was implemented in 2004
[121] My interviewee also noted that having donors sign sector working group documents makes them 'get their hands dirty.' His comment suggests an interesting point. Getting donor consent may be important to prevent donors from resending on promises when it is convenient for them.

four sub-groups. In addition, there is a new technical working group comprised of those donors that provide budget support (DFID, Belgium, and Germany), and the Swiss, who have a program for capacity building.[122] In response to questions about the benefits and challenges of so many forums, the health sector Chair told me that, although coordination is good, there is the question of over-coordination (Interview II-XIII, 06.18.10).

Furthermore, it has not always been easy to get donors to align their priorities. More than one donor mentioned to me that the US emphasis on HIV/AIDs due to the PEPFAR program was not aligned with Rwandan needs (Interview II-X, 06.10.10; Interview II-XIII, 06.18.10).[123] Additionally, in the health sector, the US has unilaterally drafted reports for the GoR without the knowledge of other donors, leading some to question how deep their commitment to the Paris Principals really goes (Interview II-XIII, 06.18.10).

The experience of the health sector with coordination, suggests that donor coordination, harmonization, and alignment faces many challenges in Rwanda. Additionally, it suggests that donors remain part and parcel of decision-making structures regarding aid policy in Rwanda. Although the GoR technically chairs the sector working group, it is donors that hold the Secretariat and set the agenda for the meetings.

Division of Labour

At the 2010 Development Partners Retreat, the GoR introduced a new plan to restructure donor sector involvement, entitled the Division of Labour (DoL). The new Division of Labour limits donor involvement to three sectors. The GoR argues that, "Un-equal distribution of donor support not only distorts equitable development of sectors, but it

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[122] Invitations to participate were also recently sent to the US and the UN.
[123] The prevalence of HIV/AIDs is much lower in Rwanda than many other African nations. UNICEF (2010) estimated that the adult HIV prevalence rate (aged 15–49) was 2.9% in 2009 (UNICEF 2010).

undermines national leadership of the development agenda" (GoR 2010a, 4). Therefore, in early 2010, the GoR proposed the Division of Labour in order to limit donor involvement to three sectors. During the following spring and summer, donors engaged in bilateral discussions (often involving their headquarters), and proposed a Division of Labour that was more reflective of donor preferences during a July 2010 meeting of the DPCG (see Table 6.2 below).

Table 6.2: Donor Involvement by Sector under Division of Labour

	Education	**Health & Population**	**Social Protection**	**Employment & Capacity-Building**	**Youth, Sports, & Culture**	**Transportation & ICT**	**Energy**	**Water& Sanitation**	**Agriculture**	**Forestry Land & Environment**	**Manufacturing, Services & Industry**	**Decentralization / CDF**	**Justice Reconciliation, Law & Order**
Belgium	S	●					●		●				●
Canada	S+			●					●				
Germany	●	S+		●								●	
Japan	●					S	S	●	●				
Netherlands	S+						●					●	●
Sweden			●							●			●
DFID	●	S	●						●				
US		●		●					●				
AfDB	S+					●	●	●					
EC			S+			●			●				●
WB		S+	S			●	●		●				

S= Silent Partnership / S+ = Silent Partnership + Sector Budget Support

Adapted from "Donor Division of Labour in Rwanda" (GoR 2010a)

The proposal caused quite an uproar upon its initial presentation at the January 2011 Development Partners Retreat. One interviewee told me it was "almost a fight," with donors calling line ministers and telling them they would not be able to support them (Interview II-V, 06.05.10). The plan was still a dominant topic of discussion when I was in Kigali the following summer (2011). Donors conveyed a range of opinions about the DoL to me, and, given that most were currently engaged in diplomatic discussions with the GoR, it was hard to get a clear answer from many. In general, most conveyed a basic belief that the idea was a good one, but pointed to hurdles and challenges for the plan.

For some donors, limiting engagement to three sectors is not a particularly big deal—or at least that is what I was told. Some donors are only active in one or two sectors to begin with and others are already working to focus their engagement on a few priority sectors to maximize their return. For example, a representative at USAID told me that eighty to ninety percent of US aid for 2010 is already in three sectors: health, agriculture, and economic growth (Interview II-VIII, 06.09.10). Similarly, a World Bank representative told me that they are lucky. They had previously developed a country assistance strategy with the government, during which they were encouraged to concentrate in certain areas. These are the sectors that they were given (Interview II-IX, 06.10.10).

However, concerns arise for donors that are currently active across multiple sectors. A particularly challenging case is the United Nations. The organization is technically one organization under the One UN program but has various agencies all with different foci and agendas.[124] Additionally, there are potential conflicts with the various agencies' mandate

[124] The UN was broken down in to its various agencies in the final DoL.

from the UN General Assembly. For example, UNDP cannot just get rid of their focus on governance (Interview II-XX, 06.29.10).

A concern raised by many is that forcing donors to focus on three sectors will cause a net decrease in ODA to Rwanda (Interview II-X, 06.10.10). The government response to this concern is that donors should increasingly use silent partnerships, and sector and general budget support. This would minimize donor involvement while maintaining (or increasing) aid levels. How realistic this is varies by donor. For example, as was pointed out in chapter five, the US is not likely to engage in general budget support in Rwanda in the near future.

At first glance, Division of Labour proposal appears to decrease donor influence. However, as one interviewee put it, "the devil is in the details" (Interview II-XIII, 06.18.10). There are a host of exceptions and ways of interpreting the policy that will likely allow donors to continue business (at least somewhat) as usual. While many donors appeared to get rather exercised when the proposal was first presented, most have now engaged in intense bilateral negotiations that have resolved many of their concerns.

For example, USAID reached an agreement with MINECOFIN through meetings with the head of the Africa division of USAID in Washington, DC (Interview II-VIII, 06.09.10), and the World Bank will continue to be involved in other sectors on the "soft side," i.e. through technical assistance and analytic work (Interview II-IX, 06.10.10). As one donor representative put it, you are not supposed to have projects in other sectors, but questions of expertise and technical input are "fuzzier."

For donors engaged in general budget support, the problem appears to be even less of an issue. Providing general budget support appears to grant donors the license to participate in any sectors they desire. Given that they fund the state itself – not specific sectors or programs – they must monitor their entire aid portfolio and, therefore, are theoretically able to attend all sector meetings (Interview II-X, 06.10.10).

The domestic actor that appears to benefit the most from the Division of Labour is, once again, the Ministry of Finance. Not only is the Ministry of Finance exempt from the Division of Labor (i.e. any number of donors can fund it), but the plan is a not so subtle attempt to encourage donors to use funding mechanisms (like budget support) that are entirely controlled by the Ministry of Finance (Interview II-X, 06.10.10; Interview II-XVII, 06.24.10). When the proposal was first introduced, both civil society and line ministries raised concerns, fearing a drop in revenue and influence under the Division of Labour (Interview II-V, 06.05.10).

6.4. Joint Action Forums

The last component of the ACHA framework that deserves attention is the new joint action forums. Within the past few years, a joint action forum (JAF) has been established in each of Rwanda's thirty districts. These forums are intended to serve as the main coordinating mechanism for the district level, and are supposed to improve service delivery and economic development at the local level (SNV 2009). Similar to the Development Partners Coordination Group, but at the local level, the joint action forums are supposed to bring together donors, civil society, the private sector, and government. One interviewee described the JAF a way for the government to evaluate them, but also a way for them to evaluate the government. His colleague added that it is also a way to harmonize, as NGOs share their current activities to avoid duplication (Interview II-XIV, 06.22.10).

In my interviews, I found that most bilateral and multilateral donors were vaguely aware of the existence of the JAFs but rarely participated in them; one person put it this way, "who goes to districts" (Informal Conversations: Kigali, 06.15.10). International NGOs were more likely to have experience with the forums, given that they work at the district level much more.

Joint Action Forums are relatively new, and I was told that some districts work better than others. According to one of my interviewees, one challenge is that local authorities often think of the JAF as a space for fundraising and reporting, not for coordination (Interview II-XXII, 07.02.10). To improve their functioning, the Director of National Planning at the Ministry of Finance wants to put a person in each district that would serve as the focal point for Rwanda's EDPRS. This individual would also know the Aid Policy and have a direct link with the Ministry of Finance (Interview II-V, 06.05.10).

This plan is unsettling, given concerns raised by my interviewees that the forums do not actually provide an open space for discussion and dialogue. One interviewee noted that that not everyone is happy with the Joint Action Forums, because priorities are predefined for them (Interview II.IV, 06.05.10). Another noted that she doesn't think NGOs really have much of a say in forum proceedings; instead, the body is another way to report to government on activities and budgets (Informal Conversation: Kigali, 06.24.10). A report from the Netherlands Development Organization (SNV) on the Joint Action Forums echoes many of these concerns, noting that there is limited participation by civil society and the private sector (SNV 2009). If a national point person was put in each district, centralization would only likely increase.

Rwanda's experience with the JAF further highlights challenges facing the ACHA framework, such as capacity. Additionally, it suggests that coordination mechanisms are sometimes used as a tool to bring domestic actors into the fold. While this may increase their participation, it does not increase their influence.

6.5. Summary of Findings

In this chapter, I analyzed Rwanda's aid coordination, harmonization, and alignment (ACHA) framework, individually summarizing the major components of the ACHA framework, such as Rwanda's Aid Policy and the Development Partner's Meetings and Retreats. Each of the policies and forums discussed has a number of interesting points in its own right, and, collectively, they suggest a number of important points pertinent to the research questions of this dissertation.

First, despite a number of initiatives to limit their influence, donors remain active and influential in Rwanda's aid policy decision-making process. Donors, particularly those that are more vocal in their support of ownership, often take different approaches to exerting this influence, avoiding formal conditionalities for a language of partnership. However, there is little evidence to suggest that they do so at a cost to their interests or influence.

The ACHA framework has created a complex set of bodies and institutions to coordinate, harmonize, and align donor and GoR practices. The GoR officially "chairs" these bodies and institutions. However, donors "co-chair" them, often acting behind the scenes in powerful ways (such as setting the agenda for the meetings). Additionally, these meeting groups and forums are in addition to, not in place of, bilateral meetings and diplomatic visits. At the end of the day, bilateral negotiations still supersede all commitments made in coordination forums. As one interviewee told me, it is not difficult to figure out which commitments are more important—those that are made via the Common Performance

Assessment Framework, or those made through bilateral talks at the Kivu retreat (Interview II-XII, 06.18.10). The latter takes precedent.

Second, donors' level of commitment to the idea of ownership varies. Some donors actively support the ACHA framework (e.g., the UK and the UN), whereas others are more passive participants (e.g., the US), and still others do not participate at all (e.g., China and Korea). As one interviewee told me, the Paris Declaration is supposed to get all donors, not just those that provide budget support. However, some do a better than others (Interview II-XII, 06.18.10). My interviewees were particularly critical of the US on this point. For example, a senior Ministry of Finance official told me that the US is probably one of his biggest donor problems. (Interview II-V, 06.05.10), while a senior DFID official noted that the ten commandments of Paris are lessons the Americans haven't learned yet (Interview I-XII, 11.04.09).

Third, just as with budget support, the Ministry of Finance dominates the ACHA framework, resulting in the further marginalization of other domestic actors. Civil society has become more visible recently, but there is reason to believe that their inclusion is mainly for "sensitization" purposes and to pacify critics. Overwhelmingly, the reforms implemented under the ACHA framework centralize authority in the executive branch and, in particular, with the Ministry of Finance. The ACHA framework not only side-steps civil society, parliament, and local government, but also limits the influence of other line ministers at the national level. In all of my questions about donor coordination and government-donor relationships in Rwanda, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was never mentioned. As one interviewee put it, in Rwanda, the Minister of Finance is the donor coordinator (Interview I-II, 10.19.09).

Table 6.3 outlines how the findings from my case study of the ACHA framework map on to the key variables of interest in this study.

Table 6.3: Summary of Findings

	Government Policymakers	**Donors**	**Citizens**
Changes in influence over *aid policy*:	The Ministry of Finance has gained more influence but is still constrained by donor preferences.	Donors remain very influential and active in development policy	Citizen influence over aid policy decisions remains low.

These findings are identical to those in the case study of budget support presented in the previous chapter. The ACHA framework does appear to have altered the institutional relationship between the GoR and its donors, but not in the ways predicted by proponents of ownership. While the GoR has increasingly participated more in decision-making on aid policy, donors remain influential and citizen participation has been marginal.

Chapter 7
The Rwandan Joint Governance Assessment

JGA helps all of us in the direction of the Paris Declaration. In the context of the 2005 Paris Declaration, there are injunctions to support partner country efforts to strengthen governance and to increase aid alignment with partner country priorities. It is our firm belief that the JGA will contribute to the implementation of this strategy by providing a basis for reviewing governance priorities and monitoring progress.

-Anthony Kwaku Ohemeng-Boamah, UNDP Country Representative to Rwanda, 2009

The Rwandan Joint Governance Assessment (JGA) is a "jointly owned" set of indicators that measure governance and progress in governance in Rwanda. The central objective of the JGA is to produce a single governance assessment that both donors and the GoR can use.[125] The idea for the JGA came about in 2006, and the first report was approved in 2008. It is arguably the first of its kind globally (RGAC 2009; Williams et al. 2009).

The JGA is different from the aid programs analyzed in the previous chapters in two important ways. First, it is (by design) "jointly owned." That is, donors are supposed to be partners in decision-making processes. There is some tension between ownership approaches that seek government control, and those that seek partnership with donors (see chapter two, pg. 30). However, both attempt to decrease donor influence and increase the influence of recipient-country governments. The JGA does not attempt to remove donors from the policy decision-making processes, but it is intended to give the GoR more control and influence over how they are measured and assessed as a government.

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[125] For a quick overview of the JGA and a discussion of the benefits and challenges of a joint assessment see Williams et al. (2009).

Second, the JGA deals with governance, which is a highly politically sensitive topic for the GoR.[126] As was noted in chapter four, the Rwandan government has a reputation for dismissing critiques of the regime and marginalizing and displacing dissenters. Additionally, while the GoR and donors appear to be in congruence about economic policy, they have not always agreed about governance. While donors have sometimes expressed concerns about human rights, civil liberties, and freedom of expression, the GoR has continually asserted that they must maintain consensus to preserve peace and national security. This tension is referenced in the JGA document itself:

> On this basis, five broad challenges for governance in Rwanda are discussed below. These are necessarily selective….Everything cannot be achieved at once, and there are priorities and trade-offs to be made. For example, the goal of prioritising security and national reconciliation has implications for other aspects of governance, and is reflected in the current preference for consensual rather than adversarial politics, and strict laws prohibiting hate speech, incitement and sectarianism. How best to balance these priorities and manage trade-offs in the short to medium term will be a key ongoing issue. (JGA Report 2008, 15).

Tensions about governance make the JGA a particularly interesting ownership aid program, because it means that donor and GoR preferences are often likely to conflict. However, tensions also presented challenges during data collection. Interviewees were likely to be less forthcoming and documentation was likely to be less readily available and/or more sensitized.

If the predictions of the ownership model are correct, the JGA should allow the GoR to have more influence over decision-making on governance policy. Given that the JGA is jointly owned, we should expect donors to remain a part of the policy process; however, they

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[126] One of my interviewees began his comments on the JGA by saying, 'this is all a bit sensitive' (Interview I-XIV, 11.06.09).

should not dominate it. Therefore, we should see evidence that the GoR is setting the governance agenda with guidance and input from donors.

We should also see evidence that citizens have more influence over governance policy. Evidence of this might include a more active and involved civil society, more competitive elections, and greater domestic accountability. Not only are such predictions in line with the ownership approach to international development, but they correspond to the principals of good governance outlined in the JGA itself, including accountability, responsiveness, fairness, inclusiveness, and legitimacy (JGA Report 2008, 7).[127]

My analysis of the JGA suggests that the government has been able to use the JGA as a tool to increase its leverage over governance policy in Rwanda, and that donors, generally speaking, have allowed the GoR to lead governance debates. However, this is likely at least partly due to donor uncertainties about the stability of the Rwandan political climate. As one of my interviewees put it, the genocide makes it less easy to challenge the government, because no one knows the limit[128] (Interview I-XVIII, 01.13.09). Additionally, the JGA has not translated into more citizen influence. If anything, the JGA has allowed the GoR to control the governance debate, limiting challengers and silencing critics.

The chapter is organized into three major sections. In the first section, I summarize the JGA process thus far. In this section, I outline the global context out of which the JGA emerged, and the motivating factors behind it. I then outline the drafting process for the first report, which was approved in 2008, and discuss the difficulties that have plagued the process since the first report was published.

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[127] The JGA also lists state capacity as a pillar of good governance.
[128] Here my interviewee is likely referring to uncertainty over what practices and policies have the potential to incite violence in Rwanda.

In the second section, I present three findings that are directly related to the research questions of this dissertation. First, civil society, parliament, and local government have not been active throughout the JGA process, and their recent involvement has been somewhat superficial. Second, the body that oversees the JGA, the Rwandan Government Advisory Council, is anything but independent from the national government. Third, the JGA and its related survey have been used to dismiss unfavorable reviews of government practices. In the final section, I map my findings from this case study onto my variables of interest.

7.1. Summary of the JGA Process

Governance assessments and the Paris Declaration

Since the mid-1990s, governance has been increasingly linked to poverty reduction and human development goals. Consequently, a number of governance assessments have emerged to track progress and backsliding on governance in developing countries. According to a recent survey by the OECD, governance assessments largely serve the needs and concerns of individual donor agencies. Therefore, they are not well linked with governance processes and concerns in recipient-countries and are often at odds with the 2005 Paris Declaration (OECD 2008).

In an attempt to be more in line with the Paris Agenda, research on governance assessments has increasingly emphasized peer and country-led assessments and highlighted the importance of national institutions and local expertise. Examples of peer assessments include the African Peer Review Mechanism (which Rwanda participated in), the peer reviews overseen by the OECD, and the peer reviews needed to accede to the European

Union. The only widespread example of a country-led assessment is International IDEA's State of Democracy assessment methodology.[129]

County-led and peer assessments are increasing popular, because they are thought to foster a domestic dialogue on governance; something donor assessments typically are not thought to be able to do (OECD 2009b). Instead of relying on "naming and shaming," domestic and peer-based assessments are believed to stimulate good governance from the bottom-up by fostering a national discourse and debate on the topic. A recent document from the UNDP claims:

> …the value of a country-led governance assessment is that it serves as a critical accountability and transparency mechanism for governance performance. Democratic governance is more likely to be sustained if targets for attainment and expectations of how governments should perform are formulated by those who live within the political system. When local actors participate in the assessment process, it stimulates their demand for governance information and a demand for greater accountability from government (UNDP 2009).

That is, instead of just evaluating governance based on externally derived indicators, assessments that are locally owned are supposed to promote a vibrant national dialogue on governance. This dialogue is then thought to prompt more sustainable and meaningful changes in governance practices by engaging citizens in debates on the policies and practices that govern their lives.

It is within this global context that the idea for the Rwandan Joint Governance Assessment emerged. The JGA assesses governance in three areas: ruling justly, government effectiveness, and investment climate,[130] and is monitored by both donors and the GoR. The

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[129] An overview of the methodology is available at http://www.idea.int/sod/.

[130] Items included under the "ruling justly" category include establishing and maintaining security, national reconciliation and transitional justice, rule of law, human rights and civil liberties, political rights, and voice and accountability. Items included under the government effectiveness category include public financial management, corruption, decentralization, public service delivery, and public service reform. Items included

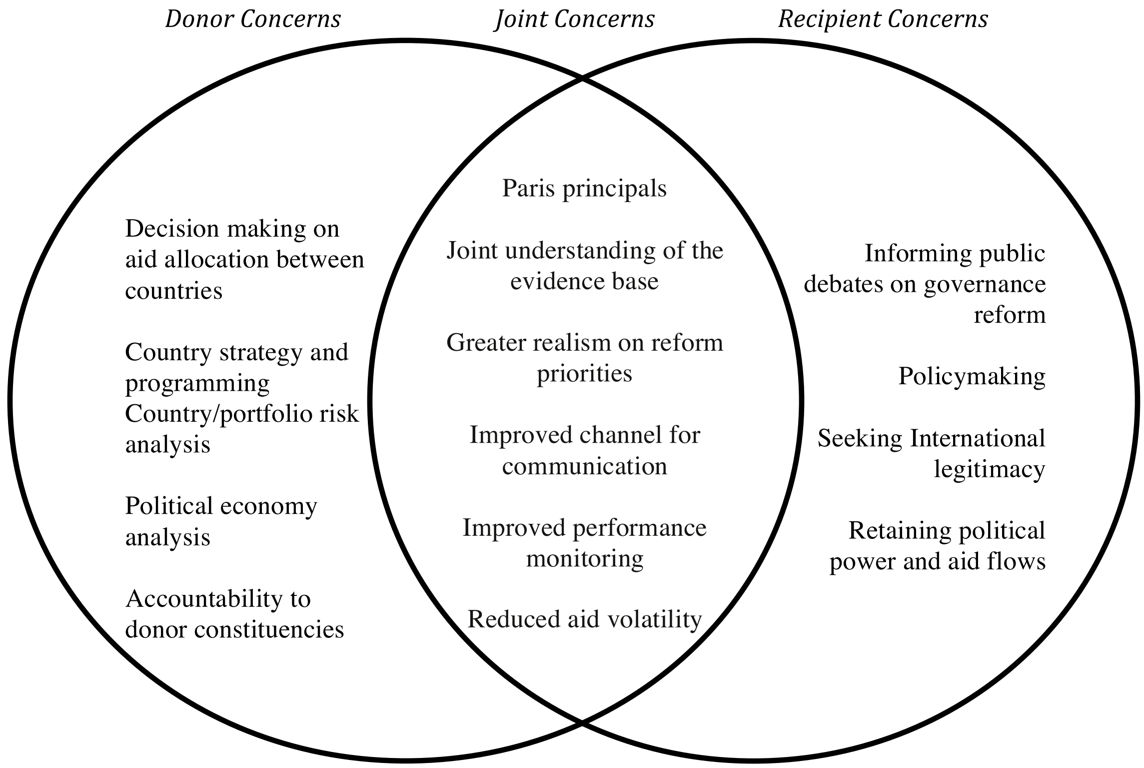
process is co-chaired by the Minister for Local Governance and a lead donor,[131] and overseen by a joint steering committee, which is made up of donors and GoR officials. A technical working group, led by a think-tank called the Rwandan Governance Advisory Council (RGAC), supports the steering committee.

The JGA is the first of its kind globally and attempts to satisfy both the needs of donors to assess governance in the contexts in which they are working and the desire for more country ownership of governance assessment. Figure 7.1 is taken from a report by the consultants that drafted the first JGA report, and depicts the individual and shared the concerns of donors and recipient-countries. The reader will note that the Paris Principals is the first joint concern listed.

under the "investment climate" category include ease of doing business, corporate law and governance, private sector advocacy, and state-business relations (JGA Report 2008).

[131] The first report was co-chaired by Victoria Kwakwa, then World Bank Country Manager, and Protais Musoni, then Minister of Local Government (JGA Report 2008).

Figure 7.1: Purposes and Users of Governance Assessments



Source: Williams et al. (2009, 3)

Motivations

According to several sources, the original impetus for the JGA came from "the top," President Paul Kagame (Musoni 2008, slide four; Interview II-XXIV, 07.13.10). During a press conference, President Kagame challenged those present to create a dialogue guided by facts, and challenged development partners to work with the government to develop governance indictors. Following the press conference, the Ministry of Local Government (MINALOC) drafted the terms of reference and the process got underway (Interview I-XVII, 11.10.09).

According to Professor Anastase Syhaka, who (in his capacity as Executive Secretary of the Rwandan Governance Advisory Council) oversees the JGA, the JGA came about largely for two reasons. First, the JGA was justified on the grounds that it would result in a single assessment that both the GoR and donors can support (AfricaTimes 2009). The Rwandan Ministry of Local Government must respond to multiple requests and visits from the external evaluators, consuming a large amount of time in a ministry that is already low on capacity. On their side, donors often spend a great deal of time funding, responding to, and deciding what is accurate from a myriad of reports on Rwanda. By producing one report that all agree on, the transaction costs of both donors and the GoR are thought to decrease.

Second, the JGA was justified on the grounds that it would result in an assessment that is locally produced and context sensitive (AfricaTimes 2009). While donors often highlight the coordination and alignment facilitated by the JGA, the GoR has increasingly emphasized the need for "local" reports, contrasting the JGA with "external" governance assessments, such as Freedom House and the Mo Ibrahim Index. The GoR critique is that external reports are often based on data collected from fly-in and fly-out missions and often do not reflect the realities on the ground.

While the GoR is not the first to make this critique of governance indices, their response is also at least partially defensive posturing. Several of my interviewees noted a desire by the GoR to combat negative governance reports with a report of their own. They pointed out that the JGA followed critical reports by the World Bank and Transparency International (Interview I-XVII, 11.10.09; Interview I-XVIII, 11.13.09). On external reports, Rwanda fairs well on indicators measuring corruption and government effectiveness. However, the country often gets poor marks on measures of voice and accountability, political rights and civil liberties (see table 4.5, pg. 71).

An employee of the Ministry of Local Government who was actively involved with the JGA's drafting told me that one of the big reasons for the JGA was controversy. While some reports were saying Rwanda is doing well and has a visionary government, others were saying that there was no civil society involvement, no freedom of media, etc. (Interview I-XVII, 11.10.09).[132] According to another interviewee, "business was getting complicated;" there were two versions of the same story (Interview I-XXII, 11.16.09). Another interviewee put it more directly, saying that the GoR was "pissed off" at external people coming in, spending little to no time in Rwanda, and making judgments (Interview I-XII, 11.4.09).

The drafting process

After the initial idea for the JGA was conceived, the first report took time to realize. One interviewee blamed the delay on "inept UNDP procurement" but securing an agency to take on the report also proved to be difficult. Two other agencies were hired before a UK firm, the Policy Practice, finally began the project in late 2007 (Interview II-XXIV, 07.13.10; Interview I-XXII, 11.16.09).[133] Policy Practice conducted approximately a month of intense fieldwork before producing a first draft of the report.

The consultants originally felt very welcomed and were told nothing was off-limits. However, at approximately the third meeting of the JGA steering committee, things turned

[132] The same employee also told me that the JGA came about because they (the government) were able to engage development partners in dialogue. Conditions on both sides allowed this. You have a government that is committed to open dialogue and improvements and a global focus on ownership and partnership. There was finally an understanding that no matter what the assessments said, in the end ownership has to be with the government. Have to trust the process (Interview I-XVII, 11.10.09). Another interviewee told me the fact that the government is open to assessment is special. It's rare in African countries to have that openness, especially in the highest office, and donors didn't think they would be open to assessment (Interview I-XXII, 11.16.09).

[133] One reportedly dropped out because of personal reasons and another because of cold feet (Interview II-XXIV, 07.13.10).

contentious. Controversy over the document was eventually so high that the GoR rejected the first draft (Interview I-XII, 11.04.09; Interview II-XXIV, 07.13.10).

The most controversial issues in the first draft revolved around the introduction to the report, which was included to provide historical and contextual background. The consultants originally believed (naïvely) that their comments in this section were uncontroversial, and were caught off-guard when they turned out to be highly contentious to the GoR.[134] Particularly difficult passages included comments about human rights abuses by both sides during the civil war and genocide, commentary about Rwanda being a hierarchical society, and a discussion about the recent change in the official language from French to English. Furthermore, in an attempt to be independent and credible, the first draft referenced critics of the regime. Such citations led the GoR to proclaim charges of genocide denial (Interview II-XXIV, 07.13.10).[135]

According to one of the original consultants, a key challenge for the Policy Practice was confusion regarding its intended purpose. On one hand, it was suppose to be a joint assessment between donors and the GoR. On the other hand, it was supposed to be an international report. After the first draft was rejected, the Policy Practice realized that they could not maintain independence, and the firm decided they could not "put their names to it." They therefore shifted their role to that of a "facilitator" (Interview II-XXIV, 07.13.10). As a result, Policy Project did not have as much of claim on the document as originally intended (Interview I-III, 10.23.09).

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[134] History has often been a point of contention in Rwanda, so much so that history hasn't been taught in schools since 1994. As Hayman notes, "The 'history' proposed by the GoR is one where pre-European arrival Rwanda was characterized by unity and general peace and that hatred and sectarianism were sown by the Europeans" (Hayman 2006, 143).

[135] This is a common tactic of the regime.

A second report was then drafted, this one largely dropping the entire historical section and the discussion of ethnicity (Interview I-XII, 11.4.09).[136] As one of my interviewees put it, the GoR went through and slashed the document (Interview I-III, 10.23.09). The second draft (which my interviewee called a "consensus document") was much better received by the GoR and was finally approved in the fall of 2008. Table 7.1 summarizes the JGA process from the drafting of the terms of reference to the first report's approval.

Table 7.1: Timeline of Joint Governance Assessment Report

Year	Month	Activities
2006	December	Engaged development partners; approved the terms of reference; formed the steering and technical committees
2007	January	Established funding mechanisms and contract management; DFID and EU contributed funds while UNDP managed the contract
	February/October	A lengthy international bidding process to procure the assessing firm. Policy Practice, Ltd. Finally engaged.
2008	January	Inception report examined and approved by steering committee Workshops and interviews begin (January 30th)
	April	Draft presented to steering committee – found inaccurate
	July	Final report examined and adopted by the steering committee (July 28th)
	September	Final report is sent to cabinet for consideration (Sept. 6th) and endorsed (Sept. 12th)
	November	Approved by donors at 2008 Development Partners Meeting
	December	Formal launch

In general, I found that my interviewees expressed satisfaction with the first JGA report, noting its imperfections but still suggesting it was a positive step forward. One donor representative was highly critical of the document, telling me it was a sensitized document and only reflected the government's priorities (Interview I-XXI, 11.16.09). However, another

[136] As one of my interviewees put it, there will not be agreement on Rwandan history for at least another 50 years (Interview I-XII, 11.4.09).

noted that it actually dealt with a number of controversial items and allowed them to have a lot of frank discussions (Interview I-XII, 11.4.09).

Moving forward: The future of the JGA

The first JGA report established a set of indictors for an annual governance assessment. The idea was to produce a yearly report that would note progress and/or backsliding. However, there has been no follow-up report since the original was issued in 2008,[137] even though work has been ongoing. In late 2009 and early 2010, a countrywide survey was conducted to collect data, and, during the summer of 2010, a new team of consultants began drafting a new report. However, the second report has been delayed several more times and, as of the time of this writing, has yet to be released.

There are multiple reasons for the continual delays (including procurement), but my interviewees most often noted coordination and capacity challenges. Many of the indicators did not have baseline data until late 2009 or early 2010. This means that progress or backsliding cannot be determined until another survey is conducted in 2011 (Interview II-IV, 06.05.10). Furthermore, the number of indicators has fluctuated. At one time, there were more than 400 indicators, but that number has since decreased to a more manageable 45.

One interviewee told me that JGA process is difficult because it is hard to get people together; they are still figuring out everybody's role (Interview I-VI, 10.30.09). Another told me that the process takes up way too much time and is not efficient. He went on to note that there are lots of constraints because of government capacity (Interview I-XI, 11.04.09). According to another interviewee, the process is challenged by issues such as the size of the

[137] It has now been recognized that an annual report is not feasible (Interview I-XVIII, 11.13.09). One of my interviewees suggested that the report should be biennial, although even this appears to be difficult to accomplish (Interview I-XI, 11.04.09).

committee overseeing the JGA, the fact that the government is relatively new, and that there are not a lot of firms with expertise in this area (Interview I-XVIII, 11.13.09).

7.2. Findings

The JGA is hypothesized to allow recipient countries to be able to exercise more control over governance policy by allowing the GoR to have a say over the indicators that are used to assess their governance practices. By its very existence, the JGA gives the GoR more of a say over governance assessment. However, donors are in no way obliged to use the JGA. While several of my interviewees expressed interest in replacing their own internal assessments with the JGA, none have done so (at least entirely). While the JGA allows the GoR more influence over how they are assessed in regards to governance, donors are not required to listen to these assessments.

Furthermore, my analysis of the JGA suggests three findings pertinent to the research questions of this dissertation. First, civil society, parliament, and local governance have not been active throughout the JGA process, and their recent involvement has been largely superficial. Second, the body that oversees the JGA, the Rwandan Government Advisory Council, is anything but independent from the national government. Third, the JGA and its related survey have been used to dismiss unfavorable reviews of the government practices. The following section outlines each one of these findings.

Involvement by civil society, parliament, and local government

Similar to the previous case studies, my JGA case study reveals little indication that domestic actors outside the central government play an influential role in the process. This is perhaps not surprising when one notes that, despite the fact that most Rwandans do not speak

English, the JGA was originally written in English (it has now be translated in to Kinyarwanda). This suggests that the document was originally targeted towards donors and a more global audience, not Rwandan citizens.

The JGA was the subject of a short case study in a document prepared for a conference on "Governance Assessments, Domestic Accountability and Agency Reform" in Madrid, Spain in 2009. The case study, based on a mission to Rwanda by the Oslo Governance Centre found "*Low awareness and lack of involvement among national stakeholders beyond the executive office and ministry of local governance"* (Meyer, Foerde, and Molanaers 2009, 13: emphasis in original). According to a short report on the case study, the civil society platform spokesperson told members of the fact-finding mission to Rwanda that the JGA was not much use to civil society, and a member of parliament told them that the JGA was for the executive not parliament. Additionally, they report that the ombudsman told them that the JGA was primarily for donor relations. Given this evidence, the case study claims that the JGA is driven by the executive and MINALOC. They conclude, "[t]here is little to no ownership of the JGA among stakeholders that are charged with oversight of the government, including parliament and the committees on politics and good governance, civil society, the ombudsman, the judiciary or the auditor general" (Meyer, Foerde, and Molanaers 2009, 15).

My interviewees made similar points. For example, one interviewee told me that although parliament is monitored by the JGA, it is not represented in discussions on JGA proceedings (Interview II-XV, 06.23.10). Another told me that he hasn't seen a link between the JGA and parliament; they maybe working on complementary things, but not because of the JGA. He went on to say that research shows that civil society is not even aware of the indicators; therefore, they aren't using them. They maybe are working on some of them indirectly, but if they don't know the JGA indicators are there, they can't be using them (Interview II-IV, 06.05.10).

Another interviewee told me that, if you really want the process to be "Rwandan," you need civil society involvement. Therefore, civil society is a part of the steering committee. However, they are not involved in the day to day; it is "not their baby." When civil society is involved, it is through a representative of the Rwandan Civil Society Platform (see pg. 125). The representative is only one person, and that person sits on the steering committee. However, the real work is done on the technical committee, where they have no input (Interview I-XVIII, 01.13.09). As a result, civil society input on the JGA has been marginal to say the least.

Independence of the Rwandan Governance Advisory Council

The JGA technical committee is chaired by a newly minted think tank called the Rwandan Governance Advisory Council (RGAC). Although the council was originally created to oversee the JGA, they are increasingly expanding their activities. Their mission statement reflects this larger purpose:

> The mission of the RGAC…is to promote the principals of good governance and monitor the practices of good governance in public institutions and conduct research in civic, political and corporate domains, for achieving institutions accountability, sustainable development and prosperity (RGAC n.d.).

Besides overseeing the JGA, the council also organizes policy debates and provides a link between national, regional, and international think tanks (Interview I-V, 10.29.09). In 2010, the council piloted a project called the "mobile school of governance," which translated the JGA from English to Kinyarwanda and brought it in to local communities.

The council has grown exponentially over the past year, both in terms of personnel and mandate. When I first visited the council in October 2009, its small staff had only two researchers, three support staff, and the Executive Secretary. The staff barely filled the large space it had recently been allotted. When I returned only eight months later, the current staff of fifteen was overrunning the space. The council is supposed to become a board, similar to the Rwandan Development Board, in the near future. This change, which would take place based on an act of Parliament, would expand and change the council's mandate, as well as bring additional institutions under it (Interview II-XV, 06.23.10).

The RGAC behaves in ways that make it appear to be a non-political research organization. It is headed by a professor (and this is always noted) and staffed by individuals with master's degrees in population studies and statistics. Just recently, the RGAC introduced a "peer-reviewed" journal,[138] and, in August 2010, the council was asked to observe the presidential elections and carry out research on several aspects of the electoral process.

However, despite appearances, the RGAC is actually a government body. Despite repeated promises to sever ties, the RGAC remains a subsidiary of the Ministry of Local Government (although it has moved from its original location inside the ministry).
Given this, it is not surprising that the RGAC often advocates for current GoR activities.

Many of RGAC's publications look more like campaign advertisements than governance assessments. A recently created Facebook page for the council is dominated by links to positive press on the Rwandan government, particularly President Paul Kagame,[139] and the council's reports on governance largely ignore critics of the regime.

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[138] How the peer-review process works has not be specified by the RGAC.
[139] See http://www.facebook.com/pages/Rwanda-Governance-Advisory-Council-RGAC/152531114805656

The first article published in the aforementioned peer-reviewed journal summarizes the World Bank's Worldwide Governance Indicators for Rwanda (see table 4.5, pg. 71). While the paper does not completely ignore negative findings, it emphasizes areas where the GoR is doing well and glosses over weaknesses (RGAC 2010b). The council's report on the 2010 presidential elections also focuses on positive findings, completely ignoring alleged transgressions (RGAC 2010a). A recent publication on corruption in Rwanda (entitled "Promoting Good Governance in Rwanda: An Out Standing Pace Towards a Corruption-Free Society") reads like a flyer for President Paul Kagame. It begins with a quote by and a photo of Kagame and concludes as follows:

> …different indexes (WGI, CPI, EABI, RGAC's data) converge on the conclusion: **Rwanda is making an outstanding pace towards a corruption-free society**, a trend that is likely to be maintained. This situation results from several measures that have been put in place by the Government including institutional setup, mindset change and adequate enforcement of rules and regulations that aim at completely eradicating corruption. If the trend is maintained, can Rwanda aspire to become a corruption-free society before 2020? At this pace, there is no doubt that Rwanda can catch up with Asian tigers in control of corruption before the end of H.E Paul Kagame's term (2010-2017), the champion of the campaign against corruption in Rwanda (RGAC 2011b, 5: emphasis in original).

This is not to say that members of the RGAC staff are ill intentioned or uncommitted to better governance. However, either because the political climate does not allow them to, or because they are ideologically committed to the current regime, more often than not the council clearly acts in ways that are intended to bolster the exact government they are supposed to objectively assess.

Dismissal of External Indices

The tendency of the council to advocate for the status quo is especially apparent in the RGAC's response to external governance indices. RGAC staff repeatedly communicated to me that external indices don't involve them in their research. According to one representative of the RGAC, Freedom House and Mo Ibrahim rely on old data instead of just talking to ministers (Interview I-XV, 11.06.09). Consequently, "real" information is missing and the indices cannot be seen as valid or taken as a realistic portrayal of what is actually occurring on the ground. At the 2010 DPM, Kagame concluded his opening address at follows:

> …because we want to promote a more reciprocal approach to good governance and development, our Government is constantly working with development partners to develop mechanisms that allow parties to conduct evidence-based assessments of our governance systems and practices. We welcome your support so the *real story* is not missed by some *so-called experts* and governance ratings (Kagame 2010, 4: my emphasis).

The external index that has received the most attention (and criticism) is the Mo Ibrahim Index. The Mo Ibrahim Index is billed as an "African" index of governance, and this has given it prominence throughout the continent. In June 2010, the Rwandan Governance Advisory Council invited staff members from the Mo Ibrahim Foundation to Rwanda for "consultative meetings" prior to the release of its 2010 index.[140]

In each of the nine indices issued by Mo Ibrahim, Rwanda's aggregate rank has been somewhere in the middle of the pack (ranking anywhere from 29-32). In the most current index, issued on October 2010, Rwanda ranked 31 out of 53, receiving high marks for sustainable economic opportunity, but low marks for safety and rule of law (see table 7.2).

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[140] The signature component of the Mo Ibrahim Foundation, which was established by the wealthy Sudanese businessman of the same name, is its governance index. Similar to other governance indexes, such as Freedom House or the World Bank Good Governance Indicators, the Mo Ibrahim Index assesses African countries on a variety of criteria pertaining to governance. However, in contrast to other indexes, the data is not collected by the Index itself but is collected from a variety of other indexes and independent sources. The scores for each indicator are then combined to produce scores in four broad categories (safety and rule of law, participation and human rights, sustainable economic opportunity, and human development) and an overall score. Lastly, from these scores, a ranking of African countries is compiled.

Table 7.2: Rwanda's Rankings in the 2010 Mo Ibrahim Index
Ranking out of fifty-three countries

Overall 2010 Ibrahim Index	Safety and Rule of Law	Participation and Human Rights	Sustainable Economic Opportunity	Human Development
31	39	34	10	25

Source: Mo Ibrahim Foundation

I had the opportunity to observe the meetings between the RGAC, other government officials, and Mo Ibrahim staff.[141] On one hand, the government should be praised for engaging the foundation. According to a staff member of Mo Ibrahim, this was the first time the foundation had consulted with an African government about the index, and governance indices certainly have problems worth exploring in a policy dialogue. However, from my vantage point, the meeting quickly became more about critiquing and "othering" all external indices than engaging on the pluses and minuses of the Ibrahim Index.

There were a total of four sessions during the policy dialogue, one for each of the four broad categories of the index. A representative of the Index first presented the results for 2010.[142] Then a representative of the Governance Advisory Council responded, and the floor was opened to questions. The presentations by the council staff critiqued the results of the Mo Ibrahim report based on the argument that "local" data, most of it from the JGA and its corresponding surveys, showed a different picture. As the report on the dialogue puts it, "…it was found that some data displayed in Mo Ibrahim report were in total contradiction not only with recorded and updated local data but also with the reality on the ground" (RGAC 2011a, 4).

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[141] I attended a daylong workshop and evening reception. According the report on the meeting, a smaller meeting also took place to following day to draft final resolutions (RGAC 2011a).
[142] The foundation, quite strategically, asked African scholars who sit on their advisory council to present the findings.

The response by Mo Ibrahim to this critique was that their index needs to have cross-national data in order to make comparisons, and the data must come from a reputable, international source to be credible. Therefore, if the council and the GoR see problems with data used for the index, they need to supply better data to the various sources used by Mo Ibrahim to calculate their score. This conversation resulted in a stalemate of sorts, with the two sides largely talking past one another.

What was particularly fascinating about the conversation is how quickly the comments from RGAC staff and other GoR representatives in attendance, particularly the Ombudsman, turned into a blanket critique of all external indices. Additionally, things that are valid critiques of governance in Rwanda, such as media freedom, were completely dismissed as inaccurate, and concerns about reliability and international credibility were outwardly ignored.

Even more telling is how the meeting was used when the 2010 Index was released in October 2010. Within three days, no less than three articles in the government-leaning *New Times* blasted the Mo Ibrahim Index and a nine-page official response were released. The *New Times* first reported that:

> According to government, there was no effort at all to use some of the latest data collected and certified by different government bodies responsible for research and data collection during this year's ranking, hence the credibility of the findings of the index questioned (Kagire 2010a).

In another *New Times* article, this time an opinion piece by a Senior Economic Advisor to the President, the claim of bad data is reframed, this time with slightly more specificity:

> Examination of research used to arrive at the above index, leads one to question the methodology and variables used by Mo Ibrahim Foundation to arrive at their inconclusive index of governance in Africa. African data sources used in social research such as this one, have been known to be

> inaccurate, thus increasing the margin of error, that finally distorts results obtained from such research (Mamasseh 2010).

In a third article, this time authored by Professor Syhaka, the claim is of bad data is driven home along with the “we told them so” argument:

> What is clear is that is that the index is not based on facts. Even on the last Mo Ibrahim report, the government reacted over data discrepancies. *We showed them areas where there were data discrepancies, they promised to make sure to rely on more accurate data next time…If you analyze properly you see that whoever fills in this data has a plan to undermine or deliberately soil the image of the country* (quoted in Kagire 2010b, my emphasis).

Professor Syhaka’s statement also personalizes the index’s findings, arguing that the use of bad data is intentional and malicious. This follows a pattern identified by Reyntjens, who argues that, “Voices critical of the regime become victims of character assassination, intimidation or even physical threat” (2004, 202).[143]

The attack continued at the November 2010 Development Partners Meeting, where James Musoni, the current Minister of Local Government, proclaimed that “Some external people and NGOs use baseless frameworks and indexes and have been misrepresenting Rwanda’s governance status” (Musoni 2010, slide 8). Musoni went on to argue that the major external challenges to governance include:

- Some groups/ “experts” consistently define Rwanda contrary to our nation building policy and process;
- Mindset of “One size fits all” infringing on our freedom to define our political system (consensus vs. majoritarian);
- Negative/ biased reports and indexes on Rwanda’s governance

[143] For example, the GoR condemned the International Crisis Group after they issued a report very critical of the democratization process in Rwanda. The GoR issued a statement, claiming that “For the last two years, International Crisis Group (ICG) has persistently waged a misinformation campaign designed to not only malign the Government of Rwanda, but also to undermine the efforts of the Rwandan people regarding national unity and reconciliation.” They go on to name particular ICG officials claiming that they “deliberately used the ICG to advance the destructive agenda of negative organizations, including known and recorded terrorist groups…” (GoR 2002b).

- Resistance to accept country's socio-economic and political transformation (Musoni 2010, slide 21).

Musoni contrasted these challenges to local challenges, such as poverty.

Instead of fostering a debate about governance in Rwanda, it appears that the JGA is sometimes used to defend current practices and avoid addressing critiques. As one interviewee told me, the government often rejects criticism; they want to be seen as perfect. (Interview I-XI, 11.04.09). (He went on to speculate that they are trying to prevent opposition.) Instead of inviting debate and discourse on governance, the JGA appears to allow the GoR an opportunity to control the debate on governance.

7.3. Concluding Remarks

Table 7.3 maps the findings of this case study on to the dependent variables of this dissertation. The findings are slightly different from the previous case studies, as donors appear more willing to let the GoR lead policy decision-making processes on governance than those on development and aid policy. This is not necessarily surprising, given some donors' reluctance to get overly-involved with governance issues in recipient-countries, particular in contexts like Rwanda that have a history of conflict and violence.

Table 7.3: Summary of Findings

	Government Policymakers	**Donors**	**Citizens**
Changes in influence over *governance policy*:	The executive is largely unchallenged publically by donors regarding governance practices.	Donors remain very moderately involved in governance policy	Citizen influence over governance policy decisions remains low.

This does not mean that donors are completely passive regarding governance. As was noted in chapter five, both the Swedes and the Dutch withdrew budget support due to concerns over Rwandan military activity in the DRC. However, donors often remain relatively silent on governance issues in Rwanda, at least publicly. One interviewee told me, the government doesn’t respond well to criticism, but things will sometimes change if they are pointed out discreetly. She went on to note that donors have been remarkably silent on current events, referring to the tensions surrounding the 2010 presidential elections (Interview II-XXII, 07.02.10).

Even more clearly, the JGA has further centralized debates on governance at the national level. Civil society, local governments, and even parliament are largely excluded from debates of consequence on governance in Rwanda. Political competition remains low, as do domestic accountability mechanisms. As a result, citizen influence over governance policy remains small.

Chapter 8
Conclusion

The analyses presented in the previous chapters of this dissertation suggests that new aid programs designed to foster ownership in post-genocide and civil war Rwanda have not actually led to ownership, as idealized by the OECD and other bilateral and multilateral donors. Instead, aid programs, such as budget support or the Joint Governance Assessment, have resulted in what I call in this chapter “centralized collaboration.” By this, I mean a condition in which multilateral and bilateral donors work with a small group of domestic actors to design and implement socio-economic development schemes.

In this concluding chapter, I first summarize the empirical analysis found in chapters four through seven of this dissertation. My case studies of ownership aid programs in Rwanda suggest that government policymakers actively seek to influence decision-making processes. However, the aid programs have not resulted in the outcomes predicted by proponents of the ownership approach in two key ways.

One, donors have not retreated, nor given control over development to recipient countries; rather they have sought alternative ways of influencing the policy process. Two, what we see emerging in Rwanda is not broad national ownership. Instead, donors work with an elite group of government policymakers. I call this type of aid relationship “centralized collaboration,” and contrast it to the old “donorship” relationship and the idealized “ownership” relationship outlined in chapter two of this dissertation.

I then argue that evidence from my case studies suggests that the new relationship between donors and the GoR is largely the result of three things: **donor preferences**, the amount of **leverage** the GoR is able to exert over donors, and existing **state-society relationships**. Given that there are several unique features of the Rwandan case, my findings regarding the impact of the ownership approach in Rwanda are unlikely to be directly generalizable to other cases; i.e., we will not necessarily find the exact same outcome in all aid-dependent states. However, I argue there are broad similarities between many aid-dependent states and these three factors (donor preferences, leverage, and state-society relations) provide a framework for assessing and analyzing donor-government relationships and ownership aid programs in other aid-dependent states.

I conclude by outlining four policy implications of my findings. One, the recent emphasis on ownership within international development is laced with faulty assumptions. Two, while donor-government relationships are susceptible to change, change is likely to occur around the periphery rather than at the core. Three, when considering the impact of ownership aid programs, it is important to consider the existing political context. Four, ownership aid programs do not solve the broken feedback loop in foreign assistance. Each of these policy implications are important for development practitioners to keep in mind.

8.1. Centralized Collaboration

Collectively, my analysis of ownership aid programs in Rwanda suggests that such programs have altered the nature of government-donor relationships in Rwanda—but not in the ways predicted. Donor influence has not declined but has instead changed form. Additionally, citizen influence remains low. In the following section, I first summarize my empirical findings, tying together the three cases studies presented in the previous chapters. I then argue that what we see emerging in Rwanda is not ownership (nor donorship), but what I call "centralized collaboration."

Summary of empirical findings

My case studies of ownership aid programs suggest that, in Rwanda, government policymakers actively seek to influence the decision-making process. Through initiatives such as the Aid Policy (pg. 116), the Division of Labour (pg. 131), and the Donor Performance Assessment Framework (pg. 100), the GoR has asserted itself into decision-making processes that have historically been dominated by donors.

My interviewees were often quick to point this out. For example, one interviewee noted that, in Rwanda, there is strong leadership, and they know how they want to guide you. She went on to say that the GoR is very confident and "tells us no sometimes" (Interview I-VII, 10.30.09). As another interviewee suggested, this likely makes Rwanda interesting and different from than other places (Interview II-XXIII, 07.02.10).

By presenting themselves in this manner, the GoR fulfills Whitfield and her colleagues' ownership criteria of non-negotiability and confidence (Whitfield 2009). The drive and rhetoric of the GoR regarding ownership has caught the attention of Rwandan donors and has resulted in a language of partnerships and collaboration in Kigali. However, ownership aid programs have not resulted in the outcomes predicted by proponents of the ownership approach in two key ways.

One, *donors have not retreated in the way often assumed by proponents of ownership*. Rather than granting control to government policymakers, evidence from my case studies suggests that, in Rwanda, donors have merely sought additional means of influencing the policy process. For example, they have increased technical assistance, stepped-up the policy dialogue, and developed joint initiatives with the GoR.

As outlined in chapter two, donors' unwillingness to relinquish their influence is not surprising. Asking donors to give up their influence in aid-dependent states amounts to asking them to voluntarily give up control over vast sums of money that they are charged with using wisely for diplomatic, development, and/or commercial purposes. Not only is this unlikely, but it is not necessarily optimal from a development standpoint. It would, in essence, amount to granting complete control over vast amounts of money to states suffering from a variety of political and economic challenges.

However, this finding does challenge a narrative that is increasingly emerging from Rwandan scholars, which depicts Rwanda as having "policy independence," despite a great deal of aid dependence (Zorbas 2011). It is clear that the GoR often asserts itself and has attempted to gain more influence over policy decision-making in Rwanda. As Straus and Waldorf note,

> The RPF skillfully plays international donors: it exploits donor guilt over the genocide, invokes the Paris Principals on aid effectiveness, makes defiant assertions about Western neo-colonialism and Rwandan self-reliance, and adopts donor preferences and rhetoric on issues its considers peripheral and unthreatening (like gender mainstreaming) (2011, 15).

However, this does not mean that donors have simply given up their influence, or that the GoR has "policy independence."

The GoR's hard line on donor influence has likely been somewhat effective regarding donor involvement in governance, where donors are less likely to challenge the GoR for fear of the unknown and renewed violence. However, regarding economic issues, the GoR has not pushed donors aside. Instead, donors and the GoR often work in highly collaborative ways that appear to be mutually beneficial. Instead of donors retreating, many have merely changed their means of influence, working with the state instead of issuing commands from above. In other words, the nature of donor-government relationships has changed in Rwanda; not because donors have given up their influence, but because they have changed their tactics. This allows the GoR to maintain a hard line on donor involvement, and donors to appear to be upholding the Paris Principals. Under this arrangement, donors get to maintain their influence, while the GoR retains billions of dollars in development aid.

Second, *what we see emerging in Rwanda is not broad national ownership*. Instead, donors work with an elite group of government policymakers. As one interviewee told me, Rwanda relies on a small group of highly-skilled people (Interview I-VIII, 11.02.09). The case studies presented in the previous chapters suggest that ownership aid programs only exacerbate centralization in Rwanda. Poverty reduction strategies, budget support, and the ACHA framework strengthen the authority of the Ministry of Finance, and the JGA allows for the discourse on governance in Rwanda to be further regulated and controlled.

It is unclear how much of this is intentional. As one interviewee pointed out, when donors need quick results (two to three years) they work with government (Interview I-XVIII, 01.13.09). Capacity remains low in Rwanda and civil society has not strongly asserted itself. Therefore, when and if particular government agencies assert themselves, it seems reasonable for donors to latch on to these bodies. At the same time, it does seem likely that the current regime deliberately seeks out ways to perpetuate its authority in Rwanda.

Regardless of intentions, it is clear that the average Rwandan's influence on policy remains marginal. As one interviewee put it, ownership is serious here, but where is the strength in the system? It is all very top down. Rwandans are not really involved. There are key persons in the ministries that drive all the thinking. There is not enough involvement by others. It's a very autocratic way of doing things (Interview II-XIII, 06.18.10).

Neither donorship nor ownership

Historically, donors have sought to influence development from the outside. Under the "donorship" approach, donors either used monetary incentives and top-down conditionalities to pressure recipient countries to make what they saw as needed reforms, or funded stand-alone, donor-determined aid projects. Both are now thought to lead to development strategies that are unsustainable and out of touch with the actual needs of aid beneficiaries.

Alternatively, under the new ownership approach, control is thought to shift to recipient countries. Instead of donors calling the shots, recipient countries are supposed to dictate the terms of their own development through an inclusive process involving multiple domestic actors. This is supposed to close the broken feedback loop in foreign assistance, allowing aid beneficiaries to have a say over the development policies and practices that impact their daily lives.

However, the situation in Rwanda looks like neither the old donorship approach, nor the new ownership approach. Instead, my case studies of ownership aid programs in Rwanda suggest that the new emphasis on ownership has resulted in an alternative aid relationship, which I call "centralized collaboration." Under this type of aid relationship, policy decision-making is a result of input from a select group of domestic actors in close collaboration with donors (see table 8.1).

Table 8.1: Alternative Aid Relationships

	Policy decision-making is a result of…
Donorship:	donor priorities and demands.
Ownership:	an inclusive process, involving multiple domestic actors.
Centralized Collaboration:	input from a select group of domestic actors in close collaboration with donors

Instead of pressuring from the outside, donors increasingly exert influence from the inside. Donors, particularly those who advocate for ownership approaches, increasingly appear to engage with the state. Instead of working against it, *they work with it and through it*. The result has been a relationship between donors and the GoR that is less hierarchical and outwardly antagonistic. However, Rwandan donors are certainly not subservient to the government. Instead of relinquishing authority, donors merely shift their role to one that that is less visible and more technical. This qualitative change was most apparent in those donors, like the United Kingdom, that emphasize ownership.

At the same time, my case studies suggest that, rather than opening up the Rwandan political space, the new emphasis on ownership has further centralized authority into the hands of a select group of domestic actors. While the emphasis on ownership has not led donors to abandon their influence over the policy process completely, it has given the GoR an opening. Ownership aid programs have integrated top GoR officials into policy decision-making processes, but this has not translated into broad domestic participation. Domestic groups, such as civil society groups, have recently been invited to sit at the table. However, my case studies suggest that their involvement is typically only symbolic or a way of "sensitizing" such actors to the agenda already decided on by the executive.

8.2. Towards better theory and development policy

In the previous section, I argued that a type of new aid relationship, which I call centralized collaboration, has emerged in Rwanda. This aid relationship is qualitative different than "donorship," but it is also different from the "ownership" idealized in international development circles. In this section, I address the broader question, why has this new relationship emerged?

The objective of this section is to clarify what the Rwandan case has to say about ownership and government-donor relationships more broadly and to address how transferable the findings of this dissertation are likely to be. Given that there are several unique features of the Rwandan case, we may not see the exact same type of aid relationship emerging in all aid-dependent states. However, my case studies are suggestive of a broader framework for understanding donor-government relationships and assessing how ownership aid programs play out in other aid-dependent countries. Additionally, they suggest several policy implications that are important for development practitioners to keep in mind.

A framework for understanding donor-government relationships

Based on evidence from my case studies, in this dissertation I argue that what we see emerging in Rwanda is not "ownership" but "centralized collaboration." By the latter, I mean a condition where policy decision-making is the result of input from a select group of domestic actors in close collaboration with donors. But, why did such a relationship emerge in Rwanda, and how likely is it to emerge elsewhere?

Throughout this dissertation, I note several factors and mechanisms that contributed to the emergence of this new type of aid relationship; some are unique to Rwanda, while others are found in aid-dependent countries around the world. However, broadly speaking, my case studies suggest that the new relationship between donors and the GoR is largely the result of three things: individual **donor preferences**, the amount of **leverage** the GoR is able to exert over donors, and existing **state-society relationships**. These three factors provide a framework for assessing and analyzing donor-government relationships and ownership aid programs in other aid-dependent countries.

First, my dissertation suggests that individual donor preferences shape donor-government relationships. As we saw in the Rwandan case, different donors have different preferences. Some, such as the United Kingdom, prefer to work closely with the state and have ideologies that closely align with the promises of ownership. Others, such as the United States, have maintained a more traditional approach to development. While both rhetorically support “ownership,” the UK’s preference for working with the state has changed the relationship between the GoR and the UK, while the US’s relationship has remained relatively stagnate. As a result, while both clearly have an interest in influencing the policy process in Rwanda, the tactics of the UK have changed more than the tactics of the US.

Donor preferences are likely to remain somewhat constant in all aid-dependent states, because they are a characteristic of the donor not a characteristic of the country where the donor is working. For example, the UK and the US tend to work in similar ways and implement similar aid programs in the countries were they operate. That being said, donor preferences may change in different contexts based on country-specific events or the agenda and legacy of a donor in the country. For example, if a donor has strategic or commercial interests in a recipient-county, they may be more inclined to ignore transgressions. Additionally, not all donors are active in all aid dependents states, particular since many donors are attempting to target and concentrate their aid. My research suggests that before one begins to analyze donor-government relationships or diagnose the likely outcomes of ownership aid programs, it is important for researchers and practitioners to identify and categorize donor preferences in the aid-dependent country being scrutinized.

Second, my dissertation suggests that how much leverage the recipient-country is able to exert over donors is an important factor in understanding donor-government relationships.

Unlike some aid-dependent states, the GoR has maintained a strong line on ownership, asserting itself not only rhetorically but also through the implementation of programs such as the Division of Labour and the Rwandan Aid Policy. A legacy of donor guilt from the genocide, as well as a strong record of economic performance has only bolstered the GoR claims for ownership. The GoR's leverage is not absolute and is challenged by high-levels of aid dependence. Additionally, my case studies suggest that the GoR has more leverage in certain areas than others (e.g., governance). However, the leverage they do possess proved to be important factor in the relationships that emerged between the GoR and its donors.

On this factor, there is likely a good deal of variation between aid-dependent states. Leverage may depend of contextual factors, such as the genocide. However, leverage is also likely to be related to who is in power in the recipient-country, and the government's bargaining position relative to its donors. The latter likely depends not only on the country's aggregate level of aid-dependence, but also on how dependent the country is on individual donors. For example, does the country receive the majority of its aid from one or two donors, or does aid come from multiple donors?

Third, my dissertation suggests that existing state-society relations shape the impact of ownership programs. The aid programs analyzed in this dissertation were implemented in a tightly regulated and hierarchical political context that has a legacy of violent conflict between groups. Additionally, historically, civil society has not strongly asserted itself into political spaces. As a result, donors seeking domestic partnerships have largely allied with the government, cementing existing power dynamics rather than changing them.

However, if the political space of the recipient-country is more open or if there are more domestic veto players, the impact of ownership aid programs will likely be different. In contexts where power is decentralized or where civil society is vibrant, ownership aid programs may allow broader domestic participation and influence. That being said, it is not unusual for aid-dependent states to have autocratic tendencies; therefore, there maybe more cases that look like Rwanda in this regard than cases that do not.

In all aid-dependent counties, the recipient-country government relies on donors to provide support for fundamental services and goods, without which the state would collapse. This is implied in the very definition of an aid-dependent country. At the same time, donor agencies rely on the existence of the aid-dependent state to stay in business. Additionally, their reputation as an organization and, in the case of bilateral donors, the country they represent relies on the success or failure of their programs (and the country as a whole). As a result, in all aid-dependent countries, donors and recipient-countries are tightly linked and such links are unlikely to be severed anytime soon.

My research suggests that alternative donor-government relationships and differences between the outcomes of ownership aid programs are likely to come from variation in donor preferences, the amount of leverage of the recipient-country government has over donors, and existing state-society relations. When analyzing the likely impact of ownership aid programs and donor-government relationships in other country contexts, these are the factors that one should focus on.

Policy implications

Given that my dissertation is concerned with a dominant policy practice within the international development community, it is also important to consider the policy implications of my findings. My findings are not definitive enough to suggest a wholesale rejection of any particular policy or practice. However, they do suggest a number of things that development practitioners ought to keep in mind when designing and implementing ownership aid programs.

First, my findings suggest that the recent emphasis on ownership within international development is laced with faulty assumptions. Each of the potentially problematic assumptions laid out in chapter two were validated by my analysis of ownership aid programs in Rwanda. This suggests that ownership, as it is currently discussed in the development literature, is relatively ill conceived. If donors choose to implement ownership aid programs, they need to be more upfront about the changes they wish to see and the potential limitations of the programs.

Second, my findings suggest that, while donor-government relationships are susceptible to change, change is likely to occur around the periphery rather than at the core. Regardless of the aid program being implemented, donors retain interests and preferences in aid-dependent states. If a recipient country strongly asserts itself, they may succeed in changing the contours of their relationship with donors. However, donors will not simply retreat but will likely seek alternative means of influencing the policy process. These changes are meaningful, and should be accounted for by theory; however, they do not change the fact that donors remain part and parcel of decision-making structures in aid-dependent states.

Third, my findings suggest that, when considering the impact of ownership aid programs, it is important to consider the existing political context. Where authority lies is not likely to change drastically on account of the introduction of ownership aid programs. If anything, these programs might exacerbate an existing centralization of authority within the recipient-country, as we see happening in Rwanda. Therefore, it is important to first survey the existing political climate when considering the impact of ownership aid programs.

Fourth, ownership aid programs do not solve the broken feedback loop problem in foreign assistance. Even when ownership aid programs do give more influence to domestic actors, they do not inherently foster a more inclusive feedback loop. In the best-case scenario, ownership aid programs may permit high-level government policymakers to give feedback. However, there is little evidence that ownership aid programs will allow citizens – the supposed beneficiaries of development – to provide feedback on development programs and aid policy.

8.3. Concluding Remarks

The new global emphasis on ownership is predicted to make the policy decision-making processes in aid-dependent countries less donor-driven and more inclusive of a wide array of domestic actors. Doing so is predicted to make aid more effective by allowing beneficiaries more input over their own development. If aid is demand-driven, it ought to actually respond to the needs of the population better, increasing the rate of development in the world's poorest countries.

However, in my dissertation research, I find little evidence that ownership aid programs have resulted in the outcomes predicted by their proponents. While my findings are not necessarily directly transferable to other contexts, they do suggest several inherent limitations to new ownership aid programs and challenge the idea that the new emphasis on ownership, at least in its current incarnation, will actually improve aid effectiveness. Instead, my research in Rwanda suggests that, at times, "ownership" may actually exacerbate traits of foreign aid believed to hinder its effectiveness.

The dissertation also raises several other interesting questions such as, why do ownership programs increase donor influence in some cases? What types of aid relationships are most conducive to economic growth and development? Can donor-government relationships be altered to help with institutional challenges, such as commitment problems or broken feedback loops? Research in each of these areas would extend the findings of this dissertation in important and interesting ways.

Appendix 1: List of Interviews

Interview Number	Date of Interview	Ministry or Agency Represented
Fall 2009		
I-I	10.15.09	World Vision
I-II	10.19.09	KfW - German Development Bank
I-III	10.23.09	United States Agency for International Development
I-IV	10.28.09	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
I-V	10.29.09	Rwandan Governance Advisory Council
I-VI	10.30.09	United Nations Developing Programme
I-VII	10.30.09	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
I-VIII	11.02.09	Norwegian People's Aid
I-IX	11.03.09	Search for Common Ground
I-X	11.03.09	Rwandan Governance Advisory Council
I-XI	11.04.09	European Commission
I-XII	11.04.09	Department for International Development, United Kingdom
I-XIII	11.05.09	United Nations Developing Programme/Rwandan Parliament
I-XIV	11.06.09	United Nations Developing Programme
I-XV	11.06.09	Rwandan Governance Advisory Council
I-XVI	11.10.09	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
I-XVII	11.10.09	Ministry of Local Government
I-XVIII	11.13.09	European Commission
I-XIX	11.13.09	United States Agency for International Development
I-XX	11.13.09	African Development Bank
I-XXI	11.16.09	Canadian International Development Agency
I-XXII	11.16.09	World Bank
I-XXIII	11.19.09	Ministry of Economic Planning and Finance
Summer 2010		
II-I	06.01.10	Ministry of Economic Planning and Finance
II-II	06.01.10	Aid Coordination Unit (United Nations/MINECOFIN)
II-III	06.03.10	Civil Society Platform
II-IV	06.05.10	L'institut de Recherche et de Dialogue pour la Paix
II-V	06.05.10	Ministry of Economic Planning and Finance
II-VI	06.08.10	Rwandan Governance Advisory Council
II-VII	06.08.10	Rwandan Governance Advisory Council
II-VIII	06.09.10	United States Agency for International Development
II-IX	06.10.10	World Bank
II-X	06.10.10	Department for International Development, United Kingdom
II-XI	06.16.10	United Nations Developing Programme
II-XII	06.18.10	Netherlands Embassy, Rwanda
II-XIII	06.18.10	Belgian Embassy, Rwanda

II-XIV	06.22.10	Action Aid Rwanda
II-XV	06.23.10	Independent Consultant
II-XVI	06.23.10	KfW - German Development Bank
II-XVII	06.24.10	Japan International Cooperation Agency
II-XVIII	06.24.10	Japan International Cooperation Agency
II-XIX	06.29.10	Norwegian People's Aid
II-XX	06.29.10	United Nations Development Programme
II-XXI	07.02.10	Ministry of Economic Planning and Finance
II-XXII	07.02.10	Trocaire/INGO Network
II-XXIII	07.02.10	KfW - German Development Bank
II-XXIV	07.13.10	Policy Practice

Appendix 2: Primary Documents

Most of the government documents listed below are available online at the Rwandan Development Partners Website (http://www.devpartners.gov.rw/). For documentation not available online, please contact the author (hjswedlu@maxwell.syr.edu).

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Appendix 3: Aid Dependent States

Aid-Dependent States *Average ODA as a % of GNI, 2000-2008*		*Moderately Aid-Dependent States* *Average ODA as a % of GNI 2000-2008*	
Liberia	61.0	Cambodia	9.7
Micronesia	42.8	Benin	9.3
Timor-Leste	42.4	Comoros	8.8
Burundi	38.0	Chad	8.8
Marshall Islands	36.3	Senegal	8.5
Afghanistan	34.8	Central African Republic	8.2
Guinea-Bissau	34.6	Dominica	7.9
Sierra Leone	32.5	Guinea	7.5
Solomon Islands	30.0	Bolivia	7.3
Eritrea	28.9	Congo, Rep.	7.0
West Bank and Gaza	28.0	Serbia	6.8
Mozambique	26.7	Cambodia	9.7
Congo, Dem. Rep.	26.7	Benin	9.3
Sao Tome and Principe	24.1	Comoros	8.8
Palau	21.5	Chad	8.8
Malawi	21.1	Senegal	8.5
Rwanda	21.1	Central African Republic	8.2
Nicaragua	17.8	Dominica	7.9
Zambia	17.2	Guinea	7.5
Mauritania	16.5	Bolivia	7.3
Guyana	16.4	Congo, Rep.	7.0
Cape Verde	15.4	Serbia	6.8
The Gambia	14.7	Armenia	6.8
Kiribati	14.6	Papua New Guinea	6.5
Ethiopia	14.5	Bosnia and Herzegovina	6.4
Niger	14.2	Honduras	6.3
Uganda	14.1	Moldova	6.2
Mali	13.9	Nepal	6.2
Tanzania	13.8	Georgia	6.1
Burkina Faso	13.5	Lesotho	5.8
Vanuatu	13.4	Cameroon	5.7
Madagascar	13.1	Jordan	5.5
Lao PDR	12.7		
Mongolia	12.6		
Tonga	12.4		
Djibouti	11.6		
Bhutan	11.5		
Kyrgyz Republic	11.3		
Ghana	11.2		
Tajikistan	11.2		
Samoa	11.0		

Data compiled from World Bank World Development Indicators. Available at: http://data.worldbank.org/indicator

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