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**FRANCE'S DEVELOPMENT AID FOR FORMER COLONIES
IN 1981–2007**

Introduction

A historical justification for France's development aid was the country's reluctance to accept the loss of colonial dominions in the process of decolonisation after World War II, and its attempt to retain its privileged international position. French politicians attempted to retain their political, cultural, economic and military influence, irrespective of the former colonies' gradually regaining independence. The means for achieving these aims were promotion of Francophone culture, economic cooperation, military cooperation involving the presence of France's armed forces, and provision of development aid¹.

France's colonial ties with its former colonies have been replaced with a new type of relations referred to as cooperation (*coopération*). Cooperation policy was usually unilaterally imposed on newly-established states, and France dictated conditions as an entity in a position of political, economic and military strength². Development assistance constituted an element of cooperation, and despite French politicians' declarations of the humanitarian reasons for its provision – stemming from a sense of responsibility for the emerging states and a feeling of guilt for the colonial past – its primary aim was to retain France's interests and influence. "Cooperation" policy was altogether

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¹ France signed a number of agreements on military cooperation with African states after they had gained independence (J.-J. Gabas, *L'aide publique française au développement*, La Documentation Française, Paris 2005, p. 55). Other countries, such as the Federal Republic of Germany, also used development aid to attain its political and economic goals (P. Deszczyński, *Kraje rozwijające się w koncepcjach ekonomicznych SPD. Doktryna i praktyka*, Wyd. AE, Poznań 2001, p. 194).

² Cf. J.-J. Gabas, op.cit., p.21.

abandoned only in the late 1990s as part of the efforts to reform the organisational structure of France's development aid system³.

Irrespective of its real motives and hidden goals, France, since the 1960s, has been a leading donor of bilateral aid, and has actively participated in a multilateral system for aid provision through international institutions. The present article analyses France's development assistance given directly to its former colonies in the years 1981–2007 and compares it with the country's total volume of bilateral aid. The aim is to verify the view that some of the main factors determining the allocation of France's development aid are the recipient's postcolonial ties. The methods employed are statistical analysis and deductive reasoning. The article presents and attempts to explain changes in France's development policy and fluctuations in the volume of aid. It also compares the volumes of development aid for former colonies before and after the reform of its system was launched.

1. A change in France's policy towards developing countries in 1981–2007

France is seen as a country strongly focused on the protection of its interests in the territories of its former colonial empire. Because of the persisting problem of poverty in the world and the insoluble problem of ever-increasing differences between rich and poor countries, such an attitude has for many years received an unfavourable response from public opinion and the community of economists. The country's development policy was criticised as early as President Mitterrand's term, which covered the first part of the period under study. The president failed to fulfill hopes, pinned on him as a socialist, of restoring moral principles in France's African policy. The official discourse in African policy was inconsistent with the action taken. France's policy towards Africa, the main recipient of its aid, was shaped on the basis of J. Foccard's three factors: (1) politics – financing French parties' election campaigns in African countries, (2) the army – French military presence

³ Y. Tavernier, *La coopération française au développement. Bilan, analyses, perspectives.*, La Documentation Française, Ministère des Affaires Étrangères, Paris 1999, pp.18-19. Cf. K. Andrzejczak, *Reforma struktury instytucjonalnej pomocy rozwojowej Francji dla krajów rozwijających się*, Zeszyty Studiów Doktoranckich Akademii Ekonomicznej w Poznaniu, 2008 nr 41.

and military agreements, and (3) oil – Elf⁴. Former colonies were a source of exotic products and a market for French processed goods⁵.

Until the late 1990s, France's development policy had continued the policy of the country's colonial past. At the same time, as J.-J. Gabas indicates, it was unclear for public opinion and so secret that it is difficult to find documents which would help to understand its strategy or implementation rules. The institutional structure of aid was extremely complicated, linked to the old colonial apparatus, and focused on the president and the "African Cell" in his office. Assistance was used to serve French economic interests and preserve the economic dependence of developing countries. Reports on France's cooperation with developing countries, published from the 1960s onwards, were usually critical and recommended introducing necessary changes⁶.

In 1995, Jacques Chirac was elected president. A high level of social dissatisfaction and criticism from international financial institutions made it imperative to increase the transparency of development aid and its compatibility with international standards of this segment of foreign policy⁷. The reforms, however, were eventually initiated not by French presidents – who for many years had strived to retain their authority to determine the directions of foreign policy as part of *domaine reserve* – but by the government⁸. Unsuccessful attempts made by Alain Juppé's right-wing government were followed by a breakthrough in 1998, when Lionel Jospin, a left-wing Prime Minister, managed to start reforming the organisational structure of development assistance⁹.

Since the launch of this and consecutive reforms in 2004–2005, we have seen considerable changes in France's development policy. Aid priorities have been redefined, and areas of responsibility have been divided among various bodies. Aid planning has been based on clear

⁴ P. Hoebnik, *European Donors and "Good governance": Condition or Goal*, The European Journal of Development Research, Vol. 18. No 1, March 2006, p. 150.

⁵ J.-J. Gabas, op. cit., p. 22.

⁶ J.P. Fuchs, *Pour une politique de développement efficace, maîtrisée et transparente : rapport au Premier ministre*, La Documentation Française, Collection des rapports officiels, Paris 1995, pp. 31-32, J.-J. Gabas, op. cit., p. 21.

⁷ R. Banégas, R. Marchal J. Meimon, *La fin du pacte coloniale?*, Politique Africaine. France-Afrique. Sortir du pacte coloniale, No 105, Mars 2007, p. 12.

⁸ A. Kuczyńska, *Francja V Republiki i jej koabitacje (1986-1988, 1993-1995, 1997-2002)*, Europejskie Centrum Edukacji, Toruń 2008, pp. 331-335

⁹ P. Hoebnik, op.cit., p. 151.

criteria included in the budget. France is evidently in favour of the Millennium Development Goals, pro-poor growth, good governance, a pro-democratic provision of aid, and the idea of reducing the poorest countries' debts. It has defined a number of new aid provision instruments, which should be consistent with the principles of aid concentration and selectiveness, and compatible with other donors' activities.

Unfortunately, France's progress in actually achieving its aims is unsatisfactory. There is criticism of the way local administration tasks are carried out (e.g. the French monitoring of elections has been accused of supporting favoured candidates) and basic strategy principles are formulated (e.g. the selection of member states of the Priority Solidarity Zone in the context of democratisation and human rights protection). In the next part of the article, special emphasis will be laid on verifying the view that in today's France, as in the past, the basic criterion for aid allocation is the French colonial past¹⁰.

2. Changes in the volume of bilateral development aid in 1981–2007

France's aspirations to attain the status of a superpower, its willingness to retain influence and importance in the world, and the country's declared humanitarian motives related to its responsibility for a colonial past have, to a large extent, contributed to the fact that since the 1960s France has been one of the leading donors of development assistance (see Figure 1)¹¹. At present, to help developing countries, France annually allocates about US\$10 billion¹², including US\$6.52663 billion for bilateral aid¹³.

France is not a leading donor in terms of generosity, i.e. the amount of development aid as a share of GDP. In percentage terms, this share is far from the 0.7% required by the United Nations Organisation¹⁴. In 2007, for instance, it was 0.38%, which ranked France eleventh among

¹⁰ *L'aide publique française au développement et la politique de coopération au développement : état des lieux, analyses et propositions*, R. Mabilais, K. Herrgott (eds.), Coordination Solidarité Urgence Développement, Paris 2006, p. 99.

¹¹ Development aid – *Official Development Assistance* according to OECD terminology; see also definitions of economic assistance, P. Deszczyński, op.cit., pp. 193-194.

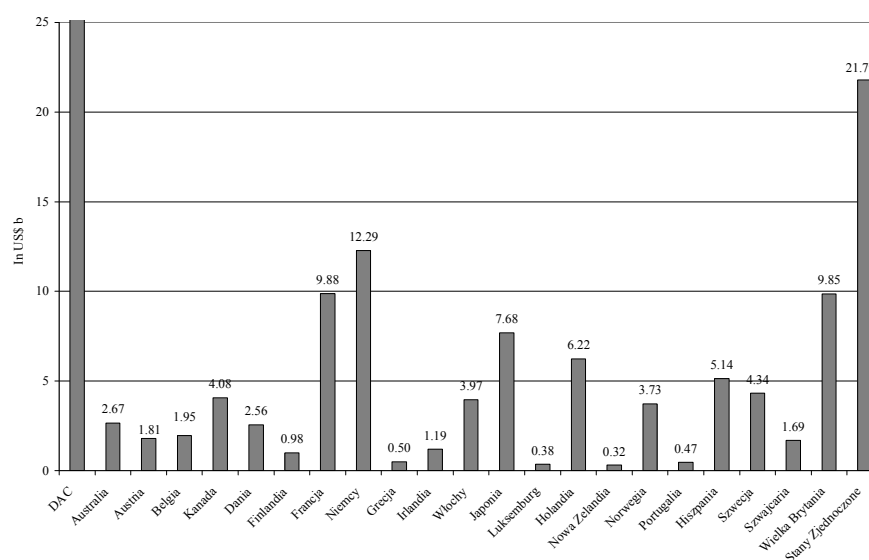
¹² In the present paper, the values of the United States dollar are given in current prices.

¹³ Data for 2008, OECD. On average, multilateral aid accounted for about 26% of the total amount of France's development aid in the period investigated.

¹⁴ In the early 1990s, France's aid as a share of its GDP was greater.

other Development Aid Committee (DAC) countries and below the average level of aid as a share of particular donors' GDPs, which amounted to 0.45%. Apart from the Netherlands, the largest proportion of GDP is allocated for aid by Scandinavian countries, with Norway's figure standing at as much as 0.95% of GDP¹⁵.

Figure 1. The volume of development aid provided by Development Aid Committee countries in 2007



Source: own study on the basis of OECD statistical data, http://www.oecd.org/document/9/0,3343,en_2649_34447_1893129_1_1_1_1,00.html.

In the years 1981–2007, during the presidencies of Francois Mitterrand and Jacques Chirac, the level of development aid was generally on the increase. Nevertheless, in the late 1990s, just before launching a reform of the system, there was a temporary and quite rapid fall in the total volume of assistance. The reduction in development aid, starting from 1996, hit Africa, especially its Sub-Saharan part, which is the main recipient of French aid (c. 50%). It is indicated that the changes resulted, among other things, from the need to adjust the French aid system to the system of international financial institutions (IFIs) and

¹⁵ *Statistical Annex of the 2009 Development Co-operation Report*, OECD, Paris.

from the country's involvement in European affairs (in 1993 the Maastricht treaty came into force)¹⁶.

An additional cause of the record low level of aid in 2000 was crossing New Caledonia and French Polynesia off the list of developing countries eligible for Official Development Assistance according to the OECD. Since the countries had received a significant proportion of the total volume of aid, the decision clearly contributed to a further reduction in the volume of French assistance. In 1999, New Caledonia and French Polynesia received aid accounting for 7.5% and 8.5%, respectively, of total bilateral aid, while in the period of 1981–1999 assistance for these territories accounted for 13% of bilateral aid.

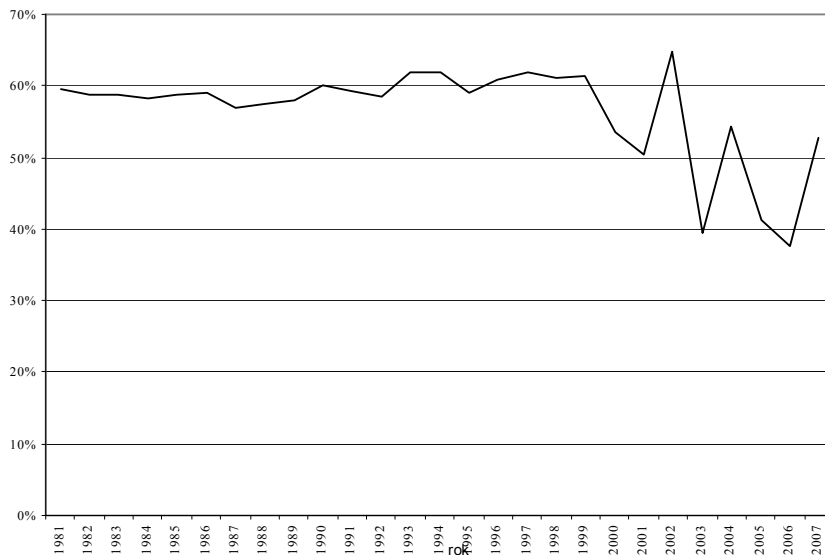
At the beginning of the present decade, the level of France's bilateral aid started to grow again. This was caused mainly by one-off debt reductions for such countries as Nigeria or Iraq. While aid for Nigeria in 1981–2004 accounted for c. 0.15% of the total volume, in the years 2005–2007 the figure was as high as 16%, with 25% in 2005. Similarly, in 1981–2004 Iraq received French aid on average of US\$2.87 million, and in 2005–2007 of about US\$728 million per year, i.e. 10% of the total volume. This clearly points to an increase in aid being caused by one-off actions and suggests the absence of new system solutions which could help to achieve development policy goals in the long term.

3. The share of aid for former colonies in the total volume of assistance in 1981–2007

Until the end of the 1990s, the share of aid for France's former colonies in the total bilateral assistance provided by that country had been about 60% (see Figure 2). The development aid system having been reformed, that share started to decrease rather chaotically. It is significant that while in 1994 the level of France's total bilateral help started to fall, this did not reduce the share of aid for former colonies in percentage terms. The share fell from 60% in 1999 to 50% only in 2001, which coincided with removing New Caledonia and French Polynesia from the list of ODA recipients.

¹⁶ J.-J Gabas, *op. cit.*, pp. 56-60.

Figure 2. The share of aid (as %) for former colonies in France’s bilateral development assistance in 1981–2007



Source: own study on the basis of OECD data, www.oecd.stat.org

However, the share of aid for former colonies grew rapidly in 2002, reaching 65%, the highest level in the period under study. This was linked to the nearly five-fold increase in assistance for Mozambique and Côte d'Ivoire (which was recovering from a recession in 2000, and for which aid was resumed after being suspended as a result of a coup d'état). At the same time, the volume of aid for countries other than former colonies remained at similar levels in 2000, 2001 and 2002. The year 2003 saw a slight decrease in aid for former colonies, with a simultaneous two-fold increase in assistance for countries from outside the former empire, especially for the Democratic Republic of Congo, which received aid primarily in the form of a debt reduction of US\$1.2 billion, and for Serbia (US\$207.89 million), which according to the OECD's methodology is treated as a developing country eligible for ODA¹⁷.

¹⁷ *République démocratique du Congo Perspectives Economiques en Afrique 2004-2005*, OECD, Paris 2005, <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/21/36/34883438.pdf>.

In 2004, the share of aid for former colonies rose again owing to a simultaneous US\$1 billion increase in the volume of transfers to those countries (increased aid for Senegal and Madagascar) and a decrease of US\$600 million for the other recipients (in 2004 the Democratic Republic of Congo received US\$134.68 million, while French aid for Zambia was US\$103.8 million greater than usual).

Because of the already-mentioned considerable debt reductions for Nigeria and Iraq, which were not parts of the French empire in the past, the share of aid for former colonies in 2005–2006 was 38%, the lowest level in the period under study. It is worth noting that, at the same time, the volume of aid for former colonies in absolute terms stayed at a similar level of about US\$3 billion in 2004–2006. In addition, another increase in former colonies' significance in 2007 results more from a lower level of assistance for the other countries than from a considerable rise in aid for former colonies.

Table 1. Changes in the share of development aid for former colonies in France's bilateral assistance in 1999–2007, as US\$ m

Year	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Bilateral aid (B)	4184.5	4127.6	2828.8	2595.8	3615.0	5213.3	5566.8	7239.1	7919.4	6258.5
Aid for former colonies (C)	2553.7	2535.4	1517.7	1308.5	2345.7 0	2058.7	3024.5	2993.3	2975.1	3299.9
Aid for the other countries	1630.8	1592.2	1311.1	1287.3	1269.3	3154.6	2542.4	4245.8	4944.3	2958.6
Share of C in B, as %	61%	61%	54%	50%	65%	39%	54%	41%	38%	53%

Source: own study on the basis of OECD data, www.oecd.stat.org

4. Aid for French colonies in Africa

A considerable growth in France's bilateral aid since the late 1980s was to a large extent linked to an increased allocation of aid in Africa. As can be seen in Figure 3, aid for the other regions did not change so

markedly¹⁸. What is more, a closer analysis of the levels of aid after 1995, when the level of France's assistance began to fall, shows clearly that also this trend concerned mainly Africa, and only after 2001 Oceania, too.

In the period under study, aid for former colonies in North Africa had risen until 1996, when it reached US\$835.8 million. Next, in 1997, it declined to US\$381.8 million. This was related to a decreased transfer of funds to Tunisia, and a year later to Algeria (over US\$100 million). In the year 2000, the level of aid for former colonies in the Maghreb region was only US\$328.3 million. On the whole, however, former colonies in North Africa have for many years been receiving a high and constant level of aid in comparison with Sub-Saharan Africa.

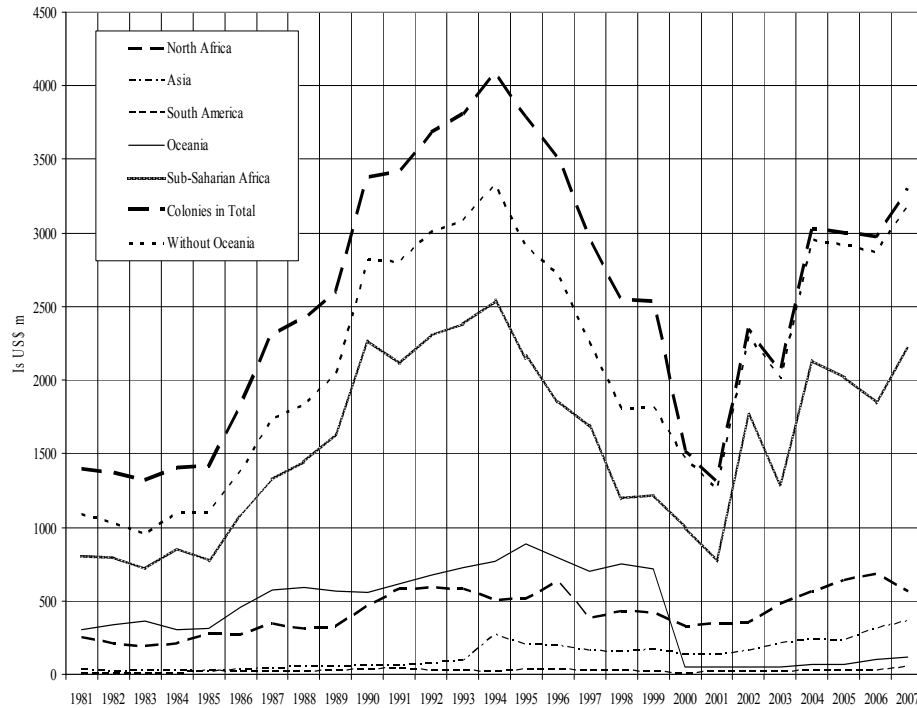
In the period investigated, the volume of aid for countries south of Sahara fluctuated widely, which was the main cause of fluctuations in the level of France's bilateral assistance in 1981–2007. France's aid amounted to about US\$798 million in 1981, and it grew every year, reaching a record level of US\$2,532.2 million in 1994. After 1994 aid for the region started falling dramatically. In the years 1994–2001, aid for Sub-Saharan colonies decreased to US\$765 million. Particularly large fluctuations in the level of development assistance were experienced by Côte d'Ivoire, Cameroon, Congo, Madagascar, Gabon, and Niger.

One of the causes of such a significant reduction in France's budget expenditure on development aid was thought to be a decreased interest in African politics in the 1990s. At that time, France's main political preoccupations were European integration and the developments in Central and Eastern Europe. The decreased volume of aid was also related to the fall of the Berlin Wall and the end of the Cold War. Finally, in 1994, when bilateral aid reached the record level in the period under study, the-then foreign minister decided to rationalise budget expenditure on aid, which reduced France's assistance in the subsequent years¹⁹. France's additionally decreased spending on developing countries after 2000 is linked to the previously mentioned deletion of territories in the Pacific from the list of legitimate ODA recipients.

¹⁸ Only aid for Vietnam rose substantially.

¹⁹ J.-J. Gabas, *op. cit.*, p. 29.

Figure 3. France's development aid for former colonies, by continent, in 1981–2007



Source: own study on the basis of OECD data, www.oecd.stat.org

In 1993–2000, France adapted its development aid to the Bretton Woods rules and practices of multilateral aid, which led to a reduction in both multilateral and bilateral assistance. The French government's joining the IFI system was accompanied by a devaluation of the CFA franc in January 1994. The cause was the IFIs' pressure on France and African countries exerted in three stages. First, the IFIs refused to finance the growing foreign-trade and public-finance deficits in franc area countries. This led to a crisis, forcing France to accept an increase in bilateral aid in order to repay money owed to the IFIs. Second, the IFIs demanded franc devaluation and adjustment to the Washington consensus rules in return for aid from France and from themselves. Finally, aid was to be gradually limited while the structural adjustment rules were to be retained. France accepted these terms.

The franc devaluation did not just transform relations within the area or relations with France: it was a practical application of the Balladur doctrine, France's surrender to the IFIs²⁰. The Balladur doctrine underlay the reduction in aid because of the need for its reorientation in relation to the IFIs' rules. As a matter of fact, it was admitted that French aid provided to support the economies of former colonies had no future in its traditional form. French aid was criticised for supporting fuel producers and cultivating personal relations with undemocratic leaders. Criticism came from both the IFIs and the European Community, which supported neither the franc area nor its financing. This stage is referred to as *fatigue de l'aide*²¹. While bilateral aid was reduced by as much as half, the level of multilateral assistance decreased by 27%. The share of aid in GDP was also cut by half, falling from the recommended 0.7% to 0.31%.

In the present decade, France is striving to increase the value of its development aid again. Geographically, its efforts ostensibly concentrate on countries of the Priority Solidarity Zone. In actual fact, the zone covers France's traditional partners, many of which are its former colonies.

5. The main recipients of France's bilateral aid in 1981–2007.

Taking into consideration the changes made in the structure of recipients of France's development aid after 1998, it should be observed that colonial ties continue to be a factor determining its allocation. It should also be added that 24 of the 30 main recipients of French aid in 1981–2007 are former colonies (Figure 1). In 24 of these countries, French is at least one of their official languages; 25 are members of the International Francophone Organisation. Territories of the former colonial empire cover the majority of France's Priority Solidarity Zone, an area on which the French aid activity has concentrated since the reform was introduced. The poorest countries, belonging to the OECD's LDC (least developed country) category, account for 46% of the 30 main recipients of France's aid in the period under study. Nevertheless, 78% of them are among the

²⁰ B. Hibou, *Contradictions de intégration régionale en Afrique Centrale*, Politique Africaine, No. 54, June 1994, <http://www.politique-africaine.com/numeros/pdf/054066.pdf>, p. 67 ; Cf. B. Coquet, J.-M. Daniel, *Perspective historique*, Politique Africaine. Dévaluation, No. 54, Juin 1994, pp. 15-18.

²¹ J.-J. Gabas, *op.cit.*, p. 59.

second fifteen main recipients²². More than half of France's preferred recipients of bilateral aid in the period examined belong to the HIPC (heavily indebted poor country) category, updated in 2007. Therefore, among the main recipients of French aid, there are more Francophone countries than the poorest ones.

Table 2. The main recipients of France's development aid in 1981–2007

Item	Total volume of aid in US\$ m, current prices	Country	France's former colony	French as official language	Membership of International Francophone Organisation	OECD category (as of 1 Jan 2003)	HIPC 10/2007
1	5970.14	Côte d'Ivoire	yes	yes	yes	LIC	yes
2	5509.53	French Polynesia (Fr.)	yes	yes	yes	MADCT*	no
3	5359.38	New Caledonia (Fr.)	yes	yes	yes	MADCT*	
4	4903.44	Senegal	yes	yes	yes	LDC	yes
5	4899.48	Morocco	yes	yes	yes	LMIC	nie
6	4656.36	Cameroon	yes	yes	yes	LIC	yes
7	4355.37	Egypt	no	one of	yes	LMIC	no
8	3633.77	Nigeria	no	no	no	LIC	no
9	3211.84	Algeria	yes	no	no	LMIC	no
10	3071.00	Madagascar	yes	yes	yes	LDC	yes
11	3005.10	Republic of Congo	yes	yes	yes	LIC	yes
12	2822.32	Majotta (Fr.)	yes	yes	yes	UMIC	no
13	2295.16	Democratic Republic of Congo	no	yes	yes	LDC	yes
14	2272.42	Tunisia	yes	one of	yes	LMIC	no
15	2257.21	Mali	yes	yes	yes	LDC	yes
16	2253.14	Iraq	no	no	no	LMIC	no
17	2030.54	China	no	no	no	LMIC	no
18	2024.38	Niger	yes	yes	yes	LDC	yes
19	2011.81	Burkina Faso	yes	yes	yes	LDC	no
20	1484.99	Vietnam	yes	one of	yes	LIC	yes
21	1478.86	Chad	yes	yes	yes	LDC	yes
22	1432.82	Gabon	yes	yes	yes	UMIC	no
23	1365.44	Guinea	yes	yes	yes	LDC	yes

²² For categories of developing countries, see P. Deszczyński, *op.cit.*, p. 13.

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24	1360.09	Central African Republic	yes	yes	yes	LDC	yes
25	1260.21	Indonesia	no	no	no	LIC**	no
26	1224.94	Mozambique	yes	no	yes	LDC***	yes
27	1149.55	Benin	yes	yes	yes	LDC	yes
28	1114.02	Mauritania	yes	one of	yes	LDC	yes
29	1082.07	Djibouti	yes	yes	yes	LDC	no
30	981.33	Togo	yes	yes	yes	LDC	yes

*Crossed off the DAC's list of developing countries receiving development aid in 2001.

**In 2006 moved to the LMIC category.

***International Francophone Organisation observer.

Source: own study based on OECD data, www.oecd.stat.org.

New Caledonia and French Polynesia, removed in 2001 from the list of countries eligible to get development aid, had received such great volumes of it before that date that they remain the second and the third biggest recipients in the whole period under study. It may also be surprising how much aid France allocated to China, which, according to the OECD's ranking list, is still entitled to assistance but is developing much faster than countries of Sub-Saharan Africa. Iraq's and Nigeria's high positions among the main recipients are related to enormous debt reductions for these countries in 2005–2007.

Considering the 1998 reform, 30 main recipients of aid in 1981–1998 and 1999–2007 were compared. As could be expected, in the years 1999–2007 New Caledonia and French Polynesia are lower on the list. After the reform, the largest amount of aid was given to Nigeria and Iraq, which were not French colonies in the past. The main recipients were joined by Majotta (a French territory), Wallis and Futuna (a French territory), Serbia²³, South Africa, Lebanon, and Brazil. In relative terms, aid was increased for the Democratic Republic of Congo, a former Belgian colony, and for Vietnam²⁴.

²³ Aid for Serbia consisted, to a large extent, in reducing the country's debt (by about US\$200 million) and providing support mainly for the educational system and, to a lesser extent, for refugees. http://stats.oecd.org/qwids/microdata.html?q=1:2+2:149+3:51+4:1+5:3+6:2003+7:1+9:85&ds=CRS_SMPL&f=json.

²⁴ Thanks to reforms of the 1990s (which opened the country to world markets), the end of the Cold War, and a reduction in Russia's influence, Vietnam started to receive more aid from Western countries, including France, its former mother country; cf. *Vietnam* –

Leading recipients of France's aid additionally include its former colonies – which also in 1981–1998 received considerable assistance (Côte d'Ivoire, Senegal, Morocco, Cameroon, Algeria, Madagascar, Republic of Congo, Mali, Burkina Faso, Niger, Tunisia, Chad, Guinea, Djibouti, Benin, and Mozambique) – as well as Egypt and China. The main thirty recipients in 1999–2007 do not include Gabon, Indonesia, Mauritania, Togo, India, or Mexico.

Table 3. The main recipients of France's bilateral development aid in 1981–1998, 1999–2007, and 1981–2007

Item	Total volume of aid in 1981–1998, in US\$ m	Country	Total volume of aid in 1999–2007, in US\$ m	Country	Total volume of aid in 1981–2007, in US\$ m	Country
1	5156.81	French Polynesia (Fr.)	3510.07	Nigeria	5970.14	Côte d'Ivoire
2	5045.51	New Caledonia (Fr.)	2208.21	Iraq	5509.53	French Polynesia (Fr.)
3	4579.82	Côte d'Ivoire	1838.89	Morocco	5359.38	New Caledonia (Fr.)
4	3128.97	Egypt	1830.81	Senegal	4903.44	Senegal
5	3072.63	Senegal	1777.70	Majotta (Fr.)	4899.48	Morocco
6	3060.59	Morocco	1675.65	Cameroon	4656.36	Cameroon
7	2980.71	Cameroon	1561.52	Dem. Rep. of Congo	4355.37	Egypt
8	2038.73	Algeria	1390.32	Côte d'Ivoire	3633.77	Nigeria
9	1910.55	Madagascar	1260.26	Rep. of Congo	3211.84	Algeria
10	1744.84	Rep. of Congo	1226.40	Egypt	3071.00	Madagascar
11	1445.82	Mali	1173.11	Algeria	3005.10	Rep. of Congo
12	1347.73	Gabon	1160.45	Madagascar	2822.32	Majotta (Fr.)
13	1301.06	Burkina Faso	1115.59	Tunisia	2295.16	Dem. Rep. of Congo
14	1299.38	Niger	887.73	Vietnam	2272.42	Tunisia
15	1241.00	China	811.39	Mali	2257.21	Mali

A country case study, Workshop on Donor Practices 11-13 September 2002, DAC OECD, Paris 2002, <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/41/1/8093949.pdf>, p. 8.

cd. tab. 3

16	1228.01	Indonesia	789.54	China	2253.14	Iraq
17	1156.83	Tunisia	725.00	Niger	2030.54	China
18	1110.31	Chad	710.75	Burkina Faso	2024.38	Niger
19	1098.85	Central African Republic	620.58	Wallis & Futuna	2011.81	Burkina Faso
20	1057.95	Guinea	576.56	Mozambique	1484.99	Vietnam
21	1044.62	Majotta (Fr.)	484.30	Serbia	1478.86	Chad
22	854.99	Mauritania	471.62	Lebanon	1432.82	Gabon
23	761.09	Djibouti	457.33	Benin	1365.44	Guinea
24	759.56	Togo	387.46	South Africa	1360.09	Central African Republic
25	737.24	India	368.55	Chad	1260.21	Indonesia
26	733.64	Dem. Rep. of Congo	352.72	French Polynesia (Fr.)	1224.94	Mozambique
27	692.22	Benin	320.98	Djibouti	1149.55	Benin
28	648.38	Mozambique	314.25	Brazil	1114.02	Mauritania
29	597.26	Vietnam	313.87	New Caledonia (Fr.)	1082.07	Djibouti
30	595.23	Mexico	307.49	Guinea	981.33	Togo

Source: own study on the basis of OECD data, www.oecd.stat.org

The analysis of the statistical data suggests that France, also after the reform, continues to focus its cooperation in accordance with geopolitical and cultural criteria, and its economic interests in regions with natural resources and niche companies (e.g. uranium mining in Niger). Having been part of France's former colonial empire is an important determinant of development aid allocation. Since, in the new millennium, France tends to extend aid through debt reductions, belonging to a group of the poorest and most heavily indebted countries is also a significant reason for getting French financial aid.

At the same time, it should be stated that giving assistance to former colonies should not as such be a reason for criticising France. Many former colonies are without a doubt very poor areas. In addition, existing cultural and language ties are factors potentially facilitating

cooperation in fund allocation, programme and project implementation, and aid management. Developing trade relations and economic partnership is also very significant. Geopolitical and economic motives in aid allocation, even if unrelated to promotion of economic development, are from the recipient's point of view still better than none at all²⁵. It is worth adding at this point that France is, in some way, an ambassador of Africa's interests in the international arena, who persuades others to transfer aid to that continent, among other things by participating in multilateral institutions to which it pays large contributions²⁶.

France's key problem is the quality of aid, understood as its effectiveness. In the past, France provided assistance for corrupt governments, supporting its own companies rather than democratisation processes in developing countries (e.g. Côte d'Ivoire). Having carried out a geographical analysis of France's development aid and examined the aid instruments used (predominance of debt reduction), it cannot be concluded that aid quality has improved considerably.

Conclusion

The above analysis of development aid transfers to developing countries in the years 1981–2007 confirms the hypothesis that being a former part of the French colonial empire has an influence on the level of development aid received from France. The country continues to be one of the least generous donors. It is guided first of all by its own interests, and only later by selection criteria or developing countries' needs²⁷. Therefore, the main recipients of France's development aid are predominantly countries which were part of its empire, as well as those which are France's main trade partners²⁸.

The decrease in development aid after 1994 did not change the constant share of aid for former colonies in the structure of French assistance. The reduced share of aid for French colonies after 2000 on the

²⁵ J.-C. Bérthelemy, *Bilateralism and Multilateralism in Official Development Assistance Policies*, "Gains and Pains of Multilateralism" Conference, Washington DC, October 2004, p. 19.

²⁶ J.-J. Gabas, *op. cit.*, p. 23.

²⁷ J.-C. Bérthelemy, *Bilateral donors' interest vs. recipients' development motives in aid allocation: do all donors behave the same?*, HWWA Conference on the Political Economy of Aid, Hamburg December 2004, p. 20.

²⁸ J.-C. Bérthelemy, *Bilateralism...*, p. 19.

one hand was a consequence of the fact that French territories in the Pacific were crossed off the list of countries eligible to receive aid; on the other, it resulted from the allocation of considerable “short impact aid” to countries from outside the former empire, such as the Democratic republic of Congo, Iraq, Serbia or Nigeria²⁹.

France, similarly to other countries, Poland included, should be more involved in helping the poorest countries. Help should be given in a form which will stimulate development, especially of the private sector. The form of assistance is as crucial in fighting poverty as the geographical structure of aid recipients. What is significant in the evaluation of France’s aid system is that its increased expenditure on development assistance has, to a large extent, been caused by debt reductions for particular countries. In the present decade, increased aid does not result from long-term strategies for developing countries. It is hoped that this is a temporary consequence of the adjustment and stabilisation of France’s development assistance following the introduction of numerous reforms after 1998, and that in the long term a higher volume of aid will translate into its greater effectiveness.

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²⁹ Cf. S. Radelet, M. Clemens, R. Bhavnani, *Aid and Growth: The Current Debate and Some New Evidence*, Centre for Global Development, February 2004, p. 17, *passim*. <http://imf.org/external/np/seminars/eng/2005/famm/pdf/radele.pdf>.

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