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Curated Reading List & Guide: Senegal

While China's relationships with African countries are dynamic and nuanced, a further look into specific sectors within individual countries is required to better assess the intentions and impacts of Chinese engagement on the African continent. This list comprises readings that focus on Chinese engagement in Senegal, a country that has developed a unique relationship with China that may jeopardize France's historical influence on the country.

Due to it being relatively resource-poor compared to its neighbors, Senegal serves as a counterexample to claims that China is merely seeking to extract oil and other natural resources from African states. Instead, most of the recent literature on Senegal discusses infrastructure and business, largely because these sectors serve as the primary forces driving Chinese engagement within the country. While infrastructure development has generally had a positive effect, it has also bolstered or even caused negative and unintended spillover effects. These impacts interact with the influx of Chinese entrepreneurs settling in Senegal, as the large migration of Chinese nationals has also generated negative public perceptions. Additionally, in the agriculture and fishing sector, there is some concern that China may be trying to extract more than it has bargained for, a view that is shared by other African nations with a large supply of natural resources.

There are twenty-seven suggested resources included in this reading list, which are organized by subtopics related to Chinese engagement in Senegal. Subtopics include background information on Chinese engagement on the African continent in general in addition to specific Chinese and Senegalese motivations that help shape the unique Sino-Senegalese relationship. Since infrastructure and business are two main focal points of their mutually shared goals, a large portion of the readings discuss the largest Chinese-funded infrastructure and industrialization projects. Lastly, the list includes the concerns of two major Senegalese industries – agriculture and fishing – to highlight more palpable imbalances in the Sino-Senegalese relationship. Key authors have been highlighted within the description of each subtopic below.

Chinese Engagement in Senegal and West Africa

The following sources provide an overview of the Chinese relationship with the African continent and the West African region in particular. Alves and Page detail the motivations behind Chinese engagement in Africa and why infrastructure and industrialization projects respectively are particularly popular. Additionally, Hazard et al. and Broadman also include analysis on India's role in African development, which provides insight into several similarities and subtle differences with China's approach.

As Page notes, building infrastructure is a key step to achieving industrialization. As African countries aim to “catch up” with the rest of the world in terms of development, industrial goals have come to the forefront of national policy. As such, China and its African partners have capitalized on these aligning needs through bilateral ‘win-win’ relationships. The balance of these relationships can be quantified using the CARI data produced by Atkins et al., which provides the most up-to-date statistics on bilateral financing between China and individual African countries.

The negative portrayals of Chinese engagement in Africa by Serge and by Gehrold and Tietze demonstrate the traditional narrative portrayed by Western media and scholars, which sometimes influences but also starkly contrasts with African perspectives. In contrast, Gadzala and Hanusch attempt to capture popular perceptions from Africans in twenty different countries. In doing so, they help to address the commonly created gap in African agency and consideration when dealing with foreign entities. By including this mix of perspectives, this reading list hopes to foster an informed view of Chinese engagement in Africa that has considered multiple dimensions.

- Alves, Ana. “China’s ‘Win-Win’ Cooperation: Unpacking the Impact of Infrastructure-for-Resources Deals in Africa.” *South African Journal of International Affairs* 20 (2013): 207–26. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10220461.2013.811337>.
- Atkins, Lucas, Deborah Bräutigam, Yunnan Chen, and Jyhjong Hwang. "China-Africa Economic Bulletin #1: Challenges of and opportunities from the commodity price slump." *CARI Economic Bulletin #1*, China Africa Research Initiative, Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies, Washington DC: CARI, 2017. <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5652847de4b033f56d2bdc29/t/59f85883ec212d5a70e9624c/1509447812591/bulletin+v5.pdf>
- Bredeloup, Sylvie. “Les entrepreneurs migrants chinois au Sénégal: La métaphore du jeu de go?” in *Le Sénégal des migrations - mobilités, identités et sociétés* edited by Momar-Coumba Diop and Gaye Daffe (Karthala: Paris, 2008), 343-362.
- Broadman, Harry G. *Africa’s Silk Road: China and India’s New Economic Frontier*. The World Bank, 2006. <https://doi.org/10.1596/978-0-8213-6835-0>.
- Casadella, Vanessa and Zeting Liu. “Chinese Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) and Barriers to Technology Transfer in Sub-Saharan Africa: Innovation Capacity and Knowledge Absorption in Senegal” in Faghil N. (eds) *Globalization and Development. Contributions to Economics* (Springer, 2019).
- Gadio, Cheikh Tidiane, and Seyni Diop. “De la nature des relations diplomatiques entre le Sénégal et la Chine.” *Monde chinois* 33, no. 1 (2013): 77. <https://doi.org/10.3917/mochi.033.0077>.
- Gadzala, Aleksandra, and Marek Hanusch. “African Perspectives on China-Africa: Gauging Popular Perceptions and Their Economic and Political Determinants,”

Afrobarometer, January 2010.

<https://afrobarometer.org/publications/wp117-african-perspectives-china-africa-auging-popular-perceptions-and-their-economic>

- Gehrold, Stefan, and Lena Tietze. "Far from Altruistic: China's Presence in Senegal," KAS International Reports, Issue 11 (2011).
https://www.kas.de/c/document_library/get_file?uuid=a2cb2655-3c82-ad66-4668-8300fdac0bff&groupId=252038.
- Hazard, Eric, Lotje De Vries, Mamadou Alimou Barry, Alexis Aka Anouan, and Nicolas Pinaud. "The Developmental Impact of the Asian Drivers on Senegal." *World Economy* 32. 11 (2009): 1563–85. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9701.2009.01250.x>.
- Moyo, Dambisa. *Dead Aid: Why Aid is Not Working and How There is a Better Way for Africa*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2010.
- Page, John. "Three Myths About African Industry." In *Foresight Africa: Top Priorities for the Continent in 2014*. The Brookings Institution, December 20, 2013.
<https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/11-foresight-myths-africa-industry-page-1.pdf>.
- Serge, Michel, "When China met Africa," *Foreign Policy*, 01 May 2008.
<https://foreignpolicy.com/2009/10/07/when-china-met-africa/>.

Infrastructure

The following articles report on the implementation and progress of Senegal's various infrastructure projects. As the articles highlight, addressing the infrastructure gap is a key aspect of President Macky Sall's "Plan for an Emerging Senegal," which delineates Senegal's ambitious goals for development up to 2035 and guide a majority of the country's current economic policy and urban planning.

Due to the infant nature of many of these infrastructure projects, the literature on this subject is still quite limited. For this reason, the following articles provide a broader analysis on the effect of Chinese-funded infrastructure rather than look at individual cases and projects. Shinn and Eisenman provide a historical account of Chinese-funded infrastructure in Senegal, while Tremann analyzes more recent activity and ties these trends back to China's Belt and Road Initiative. Moreover, in response to some of the concerns raised regarding Chinese engagement in other sectors, China has made an effort to enhance its public image amongst the local Senegalese population through Senegal's first Confucius Institute. Procopio's article looks into the impact of these Confucius Institutes to determine the efficacy of its soft power.

- Procopio, Maddalena. "The Effectiveness of Confucius Institutes as a Tool of China's Soft Power in South Africa," *African East-Asian Affairs: The China Monitor*, Issue 2 (2015):98-121. <http://aeaa.journals.ac.za/pub/article/view/155/111>.
- Shinn, David H., and Joshua Eisenman. "China's Relations with West and Central Africa." In *China and Africa: A Century of Engagement*, 284-322. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt3fhwkz.14>.
- Tremann, Cornelia. "Xi Jinping, Senegal, and China's West Africa Drive." The Lowy Institute, July 20, 2018. <https://www.loyyinstitute.org/the-interpreter/xi-jinping-senegal-and-china-west-africa-drive>.

Business

These selected readings discuss the migration of small business owners from China to Senegal and assess the impacts of this trend on the local economy. Cissé goes one step further to also analyze the impact of African traders who migrate to China, but this includes Africans from countries of origin beyond Senegal. All four readings, however, largely discuss the impact of local Chinese merchants in Senegal, who were originally contracted workers who stayed in Senegal after the completion of Henan Construction projects to establish small businesses. The success of these first entrepreneurs led to a continuous trend of Chinese entrepreneurs coming to Senegal to access this market. In terms of scale, however, their impact is still limited, as explained by the data from Marfaing and Thiel.

This migration has yielded both positive and negative reactions from local merchants. Many are displeased with the introduction of foreign competition, which has pushed out many Senegalese merchants who originally went to China themselves to acquire goods. Since Chinese merchants have better networks back in China, they are able to sell their products at a lower price than locals. However, now that these products are offered at a lower price, peddlers now have a steady supply of low-cost merchandise to distribute to the country's fringes and even to its neighbors. Thus, there is no definitive perception of their impact as the attitudes of Senegalese locals tend to vary from case to case and must take into account any predisposed biases.

- Cissé, Daouda. "South-South Migration and Sino-African Small Traders: A Comparative Study of Chinese in Senegal and Africans in China." *African Review of Economics and Finance* 5. 1 (2013): 17-28-28. <https://www.ajol.info/index.php/aref/article/view/104950/95000>.
- Dittgen, Romain. "From Isolation to Integration? A Study of Chinese Retailers in Dakar." South Africa Institute of National Affairs, March 2010. https://saiaa.org.za/wp-content/uploads/2010/03/saia_sop_57_dittgen_20100326.pdf.

- Gaye, Adama. "China in Africa: After the Gun and the Bible...A West African Perspective." In *China Returns to Africa: A Superpower and a Continent Embrace*, edited by Chris Alden, Daniel Large, and Ricardo Soares de Oliveira. New York: Columbia University Press, 2008.
- Marfaing, Laurence, and Alena Thiel. "Chinese Commodity Imports in Ghana and Senegal: Demystifying Chinese Business Strength in Urban West Africa." SSRN Scholarly Paper. Rochester, NY: Social Science Research Network, November 1, 2011. <https://papers.ssrn.com/abstract=1978369>.
- Marfaing, Laurence. "Dakar ville moderne: La médiation des entrepreneurs sénégalais en Chine." *Canadian Journal of African Studies / Revue Canadienne des Études Africaines* 53, no. 1 (January 2, 2019): 89–107. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00083968.2018.1548365>.
- Marfaing, Laurence. "Entrepreneurs sénégalais en Chine, médiateurs de modernité ? Un exposé amélioré." *Proceedings of the African Futures Conference* 1, no. 1 (June 2016): 123–37. <https://doi.org/10.1002/j.2573-508X.2016.tb00028.x>.
- Nadji, Celine, Yin Ping, and Emmanuel Sebata. "Chinese Tourists' Perceptions of Service Quality in West African Hotels: A Case Study of Senegal." *Journal of China Tourism Research* 14, no. 1 (January 2, 2018): 61–70. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19388160.2018.1430644>.
- Niang, Amy. "The Chinese Factor in Senegal: Changing Entrepreneurial Dynamics, and Socio-Economic Restructuring." In *Chinese and African Entrepreneurs: Social Impacts of Interpersonal Encounters*. Brill, 2019.

Agriculture and Fishing

While infrastructure and business have more clearly demonstrated 'win-win' benefits for both countries, Chinese engagement in the sectors of agriculture and fishing has raised alarming concern regarding breaches of national jurisdiction of both land and sea. Buckley examines the case of a Chinese-Senegalese government-run agriculture demonstration center, concluding that the two actors often clash but are capable of providing limited benefits to smallholder farmers. Lin and Farrell go further to say that state-owned enterprises generally underperform compared to private enterprises and provide evidence that Chinese private-owned enterprises have successfully facilitated knowledge dissemination and community engagement in Senegal. In the Greenpeace reading, the authors examine how China's largest fishing companies are depleting fish stocks on the coast of Senegal and its neighbors. Thus, while agriculture produces mixed results depending on whether ownership is public or private, Chinese intervention on the coast of Western Africa has generally produced negative results. All three articles, however, demonstrate that this sector requires better regulation and surveillance upon the individual actors involved to ensure credible commitments and accountability.

- Buckley, Lila. "Chinese Land-Based Interventions in Senegal." *Development and Change* 44.2 (2013): 429-450. <https://doi.org/10.1111/dech.12016>.
- Greenpeace Africa. "Scam on the African Coast: The Hidden Face of Chinese and Joint-Venture Tonnage Fraud in Senegal, Guinea Bissau and Guinea," May 2015, pp. 1-31. [https://www.greenpeace.ch/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/Scam African Coast.pdf](https://www.greenpeace.ch/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/Scam_African_Coast.pdf).
- Lin, Xiaohua, and Carlyle Farrell. "The Internationalization Strategies of Chinese State and Private Sector Enterprises in Africa." *Journal of African Business* 14. 2 (2013): 85–95. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15228916.2013.804311>.
- Ndiaye, Galaye, and Xu He Lian. "A Time Series Analysis of China's Foreign Direct Investment on Senegal's Agriculture." *Journal of Economics, Management and Trade*, April 1, 2019, 1–11. <https://doi.org/10.9734/jemt/2019/v23i230124>.