

DATA: CHINESE GLOBAL FOREIGN AID

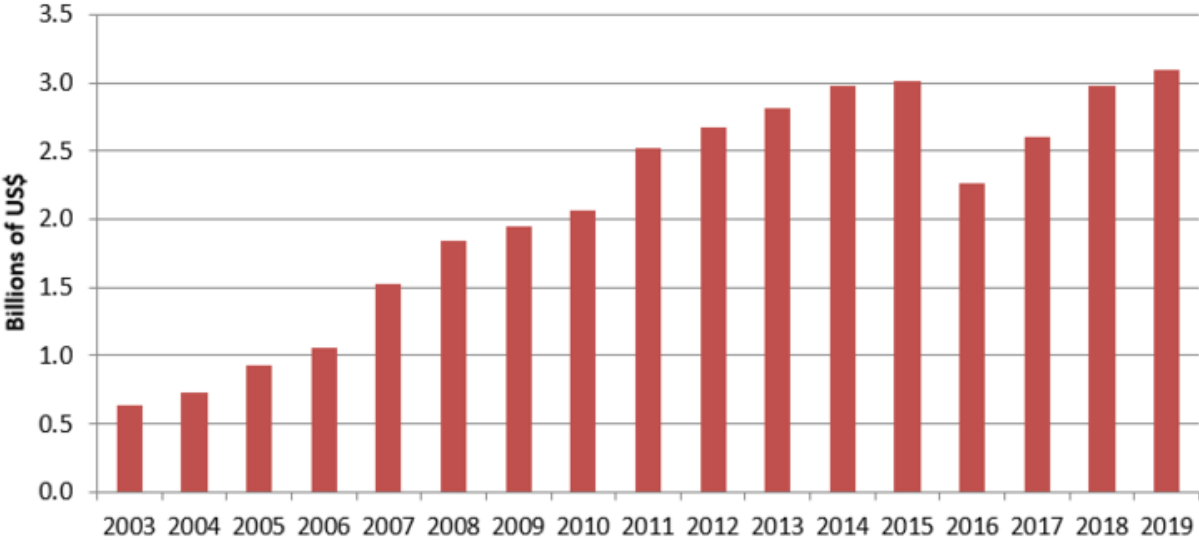


A red download icon (a downward arrow above a rectangular base) is positioned on the left. To its right, the text "Download Excel Data Global, 2003-2019" is displayed in a bold, red, sans-serif font.

1. FOREIGN AID DATA OVERVIEW

Chinese global foreign aid expenditures increased steadily from 2003 to 2015, growing from US\$ 631 million in 2003 to US\$ 3 billion in 2015. Foreign aid expenditures dropped sharply to US\$ 2.3 billion in 2016, but have since rebounded to a new high of US\$ 3.1 billion in 2019. Between 2013 and 2018, [45% of China’s foreign aid went to Africa](#).

Chinese Global Foreign Aid Expenditure



Jan 2021
Source: Ministry of Finance of China

**CHINA★AFRICA
RESEARCH INITIATIVE**


JOHNS HOPKINS
SCHOOL of ADVANCED
INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

2. CARI FOREIGN AID DATA COMPILATION

CARI has combined and converted China’s officially published foreign aid data from the Ministry of Finance. All figures are reported in millions of USD using annual exchanges rates and are available for download in Excel format. We have included all budgetary categories under

“foreign affairs”, since several categories that are considered “foreign aid” by OECD definitions are in independent categories.

3. DATA

3.1 Official data

China’s Ministry of Finance has been publishing China’s National General Public Budget Expenditure since 2003. The government’s yearly foreign aid expenditure is reported as a subcategory of diplomatic spending. It includes state expenditure on grants, interest-free loans, and interest subsidies for concessional loans (but not interest subsidies for preferential export buyer’s credits). In 2020, China’s Ministry of Finance began reporting interest subsidies as a subcategory of foreign aid.

China’s foreign aid takes three main forms – grants, interest-free loans, and concessional loans, in addition to scholarships, medical teams, and other programs. According to a [2021 white paper](#) on China’s international development cooperation published by the State Council of the PRC, “[Grants] are used to help other developing countries build small and medium-sized social welfare projects, human resource development cooperation, technical cooperation, material assistance, South-South cooperation assistance funds, and emergency humanitarian assistance... [Interest-free loans] are mainly used for public facilities and improving people’s livelihood... [Concessional loans] are provided for projects that can bring economic and social benefits, large- and medium-sized infrastructure projects.” Grants and interest-free loans are administered by the China International Development Cooperation Agency (CIDCA) while the Export-Import Bank of China offers concessional loans.

3.2 Other data sources

Due to the lack of transparency in China’s aid statistics, other efforts were undertaken to collect more information on China’s foreign aid, ranging from media-based, field-based, to extrapolating from official data. [“Estimating China’s Foreign Aid 2001-2013” \(2016\)](#), by Kitano & Harada at JICA Research Institute, provides an excellent overview of these efforts. Kitano & Harada inferred that the foreign aid figures “were based on committed amounts and that disbursed amounts were therefore still unpublished.”