Ties That Bind:
Quantifying China’s public diplomacy and its “good neighbor” effect

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The Toolkit: Quantifying China’s public diplomacy in East Asia & Pacific (EAP)

Which tools does Beijing use, with whom, and at what scale?
China’s Public Diplomacy Portfolio in the EAP

Public Diplomacy By Type and Per Year in the EAP (Normalized %)

SCOPE
China is ramping up its public diplomacy across the board, diversifying its efforts with Confucius Institutes and an uptick in financial diplomacy.

*Y-Axis is normalized according to the highest value in each category.

Notes: This figure shows the mix of China’s public diplomacy tools over time in the EAP region. Using normalized values to compare the different types of diplomacy, we see that China’s portfolio has varied its approach over time (e.g., heavy focus on official visits in 2000 and 2001, and bursts of activity on CIs from 2006 and 2007). 2016 not included because official visits not available that year. If included, the chart would show a dramatic increase in financial PD in 2016. See Appendix A-3 and A-4 for description of our methodology.
Source: Normalized data across four measures of PD across time calculated by AidData.

Source:
http://aiddata.org/
DISTRIBUTION

Beijing deploys a different volume and mix of public diplomacy tools based upon anticipated risk and reward in each country.
**COMPOSITION**
China assesses market opportunities, local conditions, and the degree of a country’s alignment with Beijing in determining which public diplomacy tools to deploy.

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### Composition of China’s Public Diplomacy Activities in Each EAP Country

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Confucius Institutes</th>
<th>Sister Cities</th>
<th>Financial Public Diplomacy</th>
<th>Elite Visits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Korea</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thailand</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indonesia</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cambodia</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malaysia</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fiji</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laos</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td></td>
<td>48%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mongolia</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Myanmar</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td></td>
<td>70%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Zealand</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td></td>
<td>78%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philippines</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vietnam</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td></td>
<td>66%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Confucius Institutes
- Sister Cities
- Financial Public Diplomacy
- Elite Visits

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**Notes:** Scores for engagement and diversity use normalized values to compare the four different types of diplomacy in each country. See Appendix A-4 for description of our methodology. Composition refers to the mix of public diplomacy used by China in a given country.

Source: AidData

Drivers of Chinese Public Diplomacy in the EAP

**FINDING**
Beijing targets its public diplomacy to open market opportunities for Chinese firms and sway natural resource ‘gatekeepers’

**FINDING**
Beijing tailors its public diplomacy in response to local factors such as: Internet penetration, size of the Chinese diaspora, and popular discontent

**FINDING**
Beijing uses sister cities to make inroads with countries less aligned with its security concerns and CIs to consolidate relationships with allies
Ground Reality: China’s public diplomacy in three EAP countries

How do other countries perceive China’s public diplomacy?
**3 COUNTRIES**

We conducted semi-structured interviews with 76 individuals in the Philippines, Malaysia, and Fiji.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Why these countries?</th>
<th>Who did we interview?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Size of Chinese investments</td>
<td>Academics/Journalists/Think Tanks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategic importance to China</td>
<td>Present/Former Government Officials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Representative of the broader EAP region</td>
<td>Foreign Embassy Diplomats</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accessibility to relevant interviewees</td>
<td>Social / Cultural / Private Sector Organizations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**What did we ask?**

- Extent of China’s Public Diplomacy Footprint
- Perceptions of China and its Public Diplomacy
- Results of China’s Public Diplomacy

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**Chinese Public Diplomacy Deep Dives in 3 Countries**
EXTENT
Support for President Duterte’s “build, build, build” campaign overshadows all other types of Chinese public diplomacy in the Philippines

PERCEPTIONS
There is a high distrust of China among average Filipinos, but elites close to President Duterte are willing to adopt a ‘compartmentalized’ approach

RESULTS
China has won key allies and tactical gains among political elites, but faces an uphill battle over the average Pinoy
MALAYSIA

Chinese Public Diplomacy Deep Dives in 3 Countries

EXTENT
Financial diplomacy dwarfs China’s other public diplomacy overtures in Malaysia

PERCEPTIONS
China is popular in Malaysia and its public image has improved, but rising scrutiny of the outgoing Najib administration may tarnish Beijing by association

RESULTS
China has outsized influence in setting the terms for its economic deals, but how much real concessions it has won from Malaysia leaders in uncertain
EXTENT
Financial diplomacy and official visits are China’s favored tools of public diplomacy in Fiji.

PERCEPTIONS
China won the loyalty of political elites for its willingness to ‘stick with Fiji’ following the 2006 military coup.

RESULTS
China has scored a series of foreign policy wins, thoughts its success is not without roadblocks.
IN SUM
Why is China engaging in public diplomacy in these three countries?

MARKETS
Open up new markets for investment opportunities to get a return on excess foreign currency reserves — the “going out” strategy

SECURITY
Assuage concerns regarding its territorial claims and to cajole leaders to support its foreign policy positions

INFLUENCE
Opportunistically knocking on open doors to maximize influence in moments of political transition or economic necessity
In Sum
Which tools appear to be working for China in these three countries?

Financial Diplomacy
Effective, but popular only with political elites

Elite-to-Elite Diplomacy
Powerful tool for turning the heads of EAP leaders

Cultural, Informational, Exchange Diplomacy
Still comparatively nascent
The Returns: Citizen perceptions of China and leader behavior in the East Asia & Pacific (EAP)

How effective is China’s public diplomacy with other countries?
### Outcome Variables for Statistical Analysis of China’s Good Neighbor Effect

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Proxy Measure Used</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Most influential?</strong></td>
<td>Respondents answered the question: “Which country has the most influence in Asia? We code an answer as ‘1’ if they answered China.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Positive influence?</strong></td>
<td>Respondents answered the question: “Generally speaking, the influence China has on our country is?” We code an answer as ‘1’ if they answered “very positive”, “positive” or “somewhat positive”.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Best development model?</strong></td>
<td>Respondents answered the question: “Which country should be a model for our own country’s development?” We coded an answer as ‘1’ if they answered China.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Foreign policy alignment?</strong></td>
<td>We calculate the difference between the voting patterns of China and a given EAP country in the UN General Assembly during the period of 2000-2016 to capture the extent to which a country is “aligned”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
IN SUM
To what extent is China earning a ‘good neighbor’ dividend for its public diplomacy efforts?

FINDING
Beijing’s financial, cultural, and elite-to-elite diplomacy are generally associated with more favorable views of China, but sister cities lag behind.

FINDING
EAP countries are most likely to vote with Beijing when they receive more official visits, Confucius Institutes, and financing on generous terms, but not necessarily when they accept more Chinese firms.
The Implications: Looking to the future of China’s public diplomacy in the East Asia & Pacific (EAP)

What does China’s increasing public diplomacy mean for the region?
Implications of Chinese Public Diplomacy in the EAP

IMPLICATION #1
Beijing’s public diplomacy could cultivate undue influence with leaders willing to exchange favors for economic gain

IMPLICATION #2
There are growing sensitivities around the blurry line between public diplomacy and clandestine influencing operations due to limited transparency

IMPLICATION #3
Beijing’s ability to influence EAP countries has as much to do with Western countries turning inward as it does the effectiveness of its public diplomacy

IN SUM
What are the implications of China’s increasing public diplomacy overtures in the EAP region?
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Extra Slides
## Proxy Measures for Quantitative Analysis of Chinese Public Diplomacy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Proxy Measure Used</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Informational Diplomacy</td>
<td>N/A -- insufficient data available to conduct comparable descriptive or statistical analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural Diplomacy</td>
<td>Number of established Confucius Institutes present in an EAP country</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exchange Diplomacy</td>
<td>Number of sister city agreements between cities or provinces in an EAP country and China</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Diplomacy</td>
<td>Total amount of official finance dollars committed by China in assistance to an EAP country to provide budget support, humanitarian assistance, infrastructure investments, and/or debt relief</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elite-to-Elite Diplomacy</td>
<td>Number of civilian or military official visits at national or provincial levels between China and a given EAP country</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Financial Diplomacy By the Numbers

Official Finance with Diplomatic Intent, 2000-2016 (USD billions, deflated to 2014 Constant USD)

Map shading by quartile of countries receiving FD

Bottom                      Top

Countries that received no FD

http://aiddata.org/
2000-2016 Official Investment in Financial Diplomacy by:

Project Completion Status

Flow Type

Sector

Notes: The spike of funding in 2016 is driven by a large infrastructure project committed to Malaysia as part of BRI.

Source: AidData’s Global Chinese Official Finance Dataset, version 1.0 (plus extended data to 2016 for the EAP region).

*This funding includes at least a 25% grant element, which is the standard set by the OECD’s Development Assistance Committee (DAC) for Official Development Assistance (ODA). Since China is not a DAC donor, AidData classifies these funds as “ODA-like” and funds that are not “ODA-like” as OOF. VOF represents financial flows that cannot be classified as either ODA-like or OOF.
Running Total of Confucius Institutes by Recipient Country Income Level

New Cultural Centers, CIs, and Festivals per Year*
New Sister Cities in EAP:

By Income Level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>High Income</th>
<th>Upper Middle Income</th>
<th>Lower Middle Income</th>
<th>Low Income</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Versus Other Regions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>East Asia &amp; Pacific (EAP)</th>
<th>Other Regions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: Sister Cities - CIFCA (n.d.) plus supplemental data from targeted Internet searches for Japan and Malaysia.

http://aiddata.org/
International Students in China

Number of international students in 2016 by country (thousands)

- South Korea: 70.5
- Thailand: 23.0
- Indonesia: 14.7
- Japan: 13.6
- Vietnam: 10.6
- Laos: 9.9
- Mongolia: 8.5
- Malaysia: 6.9
- Myanmar: 5.7
- Singapore: 5
- Australia: 4.8
- Philippines: 3.1
- Cambodia: 2.3
- North Korea: 1.8
- New Zealand: 0.9
- Papua New Guinea: 0.3
- Fiji: 0.2
- Samoa: 0.2
- Vanuatu: 0.2
- Timor-Leste: 0.2

Sources: China Power Team (2017); China Foreign Affairs Yearbook (2000-2010)
Number of Sister Cities per Country (2016)

- **Japan**: 377 Cities
- **South Korea**: 180 Cities
- **Australia**: 103 Cities
- **Malaysia**: 40 Cities
- **New Zealand**: 35 Cities
- **Vietnam**: 35 Cities
- **Thailand**: 34 Cities
- **Philippines**: 29 Cities
- **Mongolia**: 28 Cities
- **Cambodia**: 18 Cities
- **Laos**: 14 Cities
- **Indonesia**: 21 Cities
- **Not Mapped**: 4 Cities

Shading by quartile:
- **Bottom**: Lighter shades
- **Top**: Darker shades

Exchange Diplomacy By the Numbers

[http://aiddata.org/]