

Chapter 11

The Securitization of Foreign Aid: Trends, Explanations and Prospects

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The terrorist attacks on the US in 2001 precipitated a new era of securitization of foreign aid. To differing extents, all of the country cases in this volume have increasingly linked their aid budgets with security concerns since then, albeit unevenly. Our goal has been to develop an enhanced understanding of this trend. However, as the contributors have individually and collectively demonstrated, nuance and context-specificity are vital. Even for a single donor government, generalizations can be difficult to make across institutions and programs. Moreover, because of the variations between the cases, not all of our findings apply equally to all of them. Though we cannot offer facile assessments or easy answers, we hope to provide the reader with a broader perspective and heightened appreciation of the issues.

Our exploration of the securitization of foreign aid has eschewed a normative perspective, whereby all security considerations in aid discussions are censured. An honest examination of certain aspects of security, namely those subsumed under the concept of human security – and its principles of freedom from want and fear – and particularly the overhaul and restoration of armed forces, police forces and judicial systems of states previously in conflict, proves that these can be laudable, legitimate and (at times) even successful endeavors. Even so, as the chapters in this volume show, one should not ignore warnings from Cassandras and Chicken Littles: In the name of security, donors have indeed massively directed resources away from poverty reduction efforts. They have sacrificed development goals at the altar of security, often without concomitant benefits in the latter area.

This concluding chapter traces trends, explores explanations and speculates on the future of securitization. Drawing on the various chapters in this book, it identifies commonalities and divergences, as well as suggests areas for future research. We find that securitization is a common trend across all donor countries examined, though to varying degrees and with different manifestations in terms of rationales, priorities, policies and practices. We argue that there are serious reasons to be concerned about the impact of securitization on foreign aid, even if the level of alarm raised by most of those who have examined the phenomenon in the past has been overstated.

Trends

All five countries examined in this volume and the EU have experienced securitization of their foreign aid, but to different degrees and in different forms. The highest level of securitization can be found in US foreign aid – and not just since the end of the Cold War or in the immediate aftermath of 9/11, but even more so since then. Of the countries examined

here, the US has given the largest role to military actors. Japan and especially France also retain a strong degree of self-interest in the way their aid programs address conflict and security. The securitization of Canadian aid was less generalized than in other donor countries, affecting above all aid to Afghanistan and to a lesser extent Haiti, Sudan and Iraq, but not its aid programs more generally. The UK and especially the EU have resisted parts of the securitization process. Though the UK's development agenda has integrated security concerns, it has managed to retain a focus on the interests of poor people in developing countries, rather than narrowly defined self-interest. The EU, in part because of its composition of member-states and bureaucratic complexity, has been less able (or desirous) to integrate its development activities with its security concerns.

Securitization trends have manifested themselves in various ways in cross-cutting issues. For instance, they have been accompanied by a decrease in attention paid to gender issues in Canada and the US's aid programs. Meanwhile, climate change is now frequently interpreted through a security lens. Northern countries believe climate change will exacerbate other security-related problems and, increasingly, will pose an existential threat. To date, however, this has not been reflected in any major shift of aid funds for urgent mitigation and adaptation. Finally, several donor countries' Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs), in which various development, security and other actors worked closely together in sub-national units of Afghanistan and Iraq, epitomize the integration of security and development concerns.

The remainder of this section examines in turn the three components of securitization mentioned in the book's introduction where the phenomenon can be most clearly observed: new discourses, changes in the provision of foreign aid and institutional innovations. They are summarized in table 11.1.

Table 11.1: Securitization trends

	New discourses	Changes in flows	Institutional innovations
Canada	Failed and fragile states; 3D/whole-of-government approach	Important increases to some of the "fragile five" Afghanistan and Haiti, as well as Iraq (temporary); more modest increases to Sudan and West Bank/Gaza; recent desecuritization?	Creation of Stabilization and Reconstruction Task Force within DFAIT (2005) and of inter-departmental Afghanistan Task Force (2007); CIDA merged with DFAIT (2013); Kandahar PRT in Afghanistan
European Union	Fragile states; comprehensive approach	Increased focus on Africa, especially Sahel and Horn of Africa, as well as Afghanistan, Pakistan, Kosovo, Palestine, Serbia, but also Turkey, DRC	Unit for development policy coordination created in the new European External Action Service; new Commission Directorate-General for Development and Cooperation with a unit for state fragility and crisis management; new financial instruments, including African Peace Facility (2003), Instrument for Stability (2006) and Common Security and Defence Policy missions
France	Fragile states; global approach	Focus on Priority Solidarity Zone (mainly in Africa); arc of crises (the Sahel-Sahara region, Middle East and Afghanistan); SSR	Creation of Directorate of Security and Defence Cooperation within Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs (2009); inter-ministerial coordination mechanisms; no PRT

Japan	Peacebuilding; human security; conflict-affected and fragile states; War on Terror; no whole-of-government approach	Emphasis on peacebuilding activities beyond peacekeeping operations, including DDR, focus on Afghanistan, Iraq and Pakistan, but also Cambodia, Philippines, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Tanzania and Kenya	Expansion of role of Self-Defence Forces; greater autonomy of JICA (2003); restructuring of Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2006); no PRT
UK	Conflict-affected and fragile states; integrated approach	Rapid increase in ODA budget; focus on conflict-affected states that pose a threat to the UK (including Afghanistan, Pakistan, Yemen, Somalia and Iraq), as well as non-threatening (DRC); attention to SSR, also to basic services and livelihoods	Creation of Conflict and Humanitarian Affairs Department within DFID (1997); inter-departmental Conflict Prevention Pools (2001) and coordination mechanisms (including Post-Conflict Reconstruction Unit/Stabilisation Unit starting in 2004); Helmand PRT in Afghanistan, firewalls
US	State fragility/state failure; 3D/whole-of-government approach; War on Terror	USAID budget declined (1998 to 2005) but then reached new high; ODA rose dramatically after 2001; focus on Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iraq, also DRC; recent demilitarization?	USAID folded into State Department (2006), role diminished; DOD becomes a key development player with special funding mechanisms; numerous PRTs in Afghanistan and Iraq

New discourses

Several terms are associated with the securitization of foreign aid, especially fragile states and the whole-of-government approach. All donor countries in this volume came to focus on state fragility, though they used different terms and sometimes meant different things by it, even across national government departments. With the exception of Japan, all embraced a comprehensive or whole-of-government approach, albeit to differing degrees. Other terms were not so widely deployed. For instance, Japan and especially the US focused on the War on Terror, while only Japan emphasized human security within an overarching peacebuilding perspective.

The EU, by virtue of its limited foreign policy mandate, has to be aware of collective interests, as well as the interests of its member states. Countries such as France and the US demonstrated much more overt national self-interest in their discourses, as did Canada to a certain extent. Japan and especially the UK oriented their analysis and efforts in more global and altruistic terms, but without eschewing self-interest.

It is sometimes difficult to determine to what extent the new discourses are oriented towards national self-interest or focused on global public goods. The two often overlap, as achieving greater stability in fragile states could be good for donor countries *and* the stability of the international system. Likewise, a whole-of-government approach could be used to achieve global goods, which produce national benefits.

Yet it would be erroneous to believe that all forms of security-related activities in fragile states can rightfully be considered a service to the local population. Pursuing short-term national security interests often entails a zero-sum logic or a beggar-thy-neighbor approach, rather than a cooperative approach that is more likely to produce global benefits.

For example, when Western security forces used aid resources to promote their short-term national security interests in Afghanistan, they did little to promote long-term development in that country, which in turn produced few benefits for Afghans, creating local frustration with wasted resources that fed corruption and did little to win loyalty or allegiance to Western actors or values, all while endangering the lives of development workers.

- *Fragile states*

By far the most common term to emerge as part of the securitization process is ‘fragile states’. In fact, all of this volume’s country cases have embraced the concept of fragile states, with some terminological and semantic variations. The fragile states discourse is inextricably linked with the post-9/11 securitization of foreign aid, helping shift discourse away from an ethically based, poverty-focused altruistic practice towards a more self-interested national or international security-based rationale (a role Pratt [1999] attributes to the earlier concept of human security). Poor countries were not (just) a problem in and of themselves, they were reconceptualized as threats to donor countries and the international system more generally. Often conflated with failed or collapsed states, fragile states were presented by Northern actors’ discourse as breeding grounds for terrorism, crime syndicates, diseases and other problems that could boomerang to affect industrialized countries directly. Deep flaws relating to these concepts and the assumptions that underlie them have been documented elsewhere (for instance, Call 2008; Call 2011; Nay 2013). What imports here is that all donor countries examined herein adopted the term and that it played a role in formulating and/or justifying their policy.

As Wild and Elhawary note, the UK was the first to use the term, both to reflect the Global North’s concern that unstable countries and those in situations of conflict threaten international peace and security, as well as to acknowledge that state building is essential to promote development. DFID’s policy discourse evolved in line with the concept of state fragility. Wild and Elhawary explain that this department perceives a trickle-down effect from lack of development and good governance to conflict and violence. Conflict and state fragility are direct results of poverty and a lack of opportunity – and aid can redress the potential downward spiral.

The US was also an early adopter of the concept of state fragility. As Spear explains, the Clinton administration was concerned in the 1990s with the dangers associated with state failure and collapse (epitomized by Somalia) and worried about the potential spillover effect to neighbouring countries. Under George W. Bush’s presidency, the 2002 US National Security Strategy spelled out the menace presented by fragile states. Despite USAID’s efforts to portray state fragility as mainly a development issue (as DFID did in the UK), the US government continued to perceive fragile states mainly through a security lens.

Canada began to apply the vaguely defined term ‘failed and failing states’ in 2004 to countries that might pose a security risk. The following year, Brown explains, Canada’s discourse changed slightly with the use of the undefined term ‘failed and fragile states.’ Despite the lack of a precise definition, Canada still used the term to justify its decision to concentrate its aid on five fragile states, namely Afghanistan, Haiti, Iraq, Palestine and Sudan. Most of these countries were already receiving significant amounts of Canadian aid, but the added ‘fragile’ label provided additional credibility and allowed for further augmented aid flows. A change in government in 2006, spelled the end of the term ‘failed and fragile states’ but Canada’s focus on the ‘fragile five’ remained unchanged until 2009. Even so, Canada’s Department of National Defence (DND) and Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT) continued to use ‘failed and fragile states’ in their documentation to build their ‘capacities and autonomy’ (Brown). Either by accident or by

design, the lack of a clear definition allowed Canada’s various ministries to use the term to bolster their own agendas, instead of fostering inter-governmental unity.

France was a late adopter of the concept of ‘fragile states,’ using the expression as of 2005. France was reluctant to embrace established thinking on fragile states, as it felt the debate was dominated by English-speaking academia. France does not specifically treat the term as a discourse upon which to pin foreign aid, but French policymakers nonetheless recognized that ‘fragile state’ was a more elastic and versatile term than ‘collapsed state or failed state, implicitly allowing for preventive intervention’ (Marchesin).

Japan placed the concept of fragile states in the broader context of conflict-affected and fragile states, which fit better with its historical emphasis on peacebuilding and reconstruction, rather than military involvement. Little by little, the Japanese government expanded the reach and nature of its assistance to Japanese security policy. Still, human security – rather than state security – remained the frame within which aid was allocated. Nonetheless, Carvalho and Potter argue that the understanding of what constituted human security shifted under the War on Terror to encompass new threats (see below).

While the EU never fully embraced the discourse around fragile states, Furness and Gänzle note that following 9/11 official EU documents used the term ‘failed states’ and linked such nations with regional instability and the undermining of good governance. Simultaneously, the EU also began to acknowledge that ‘state failure’ might require military intervention to restore order. These discursive moves are indication of a growing awareness of security concerns among EU members.

- *Whole-of-government/comprehensive/integrated approach*

The second most common discursive innovation under securitization is the promotion of a comprehensive, integrated or whole-of-government approach, though some adopted this more extensively (Canada, UK, US) than others (France, EU), and Japan not at all. The rationale for more integrated cross-departmental efforts does not relate specifically to the security sphere. For instance, analysts of foreign aid have long called for greater policy coherence within donor countries (Stokke and Forster 1999). Momentum grew in the 2010s for moving ‘beyond aid’ to promote development. The ‘nexus’ between security and development, however, provided a rationale for an approach that incorporated defence and diplomatic actors alongside development ones. To a large extent, greater policy integration did more to subordinate development objectives to military ones than to reorient defence and diplomatic perspectives towards development goals, as illustrated in Petřík’s discussion of PRTs.

It is only after 2001 that the US openly acted to combine the efforts of defence, development and diplomacy (the 3Ds) in a concerted fashion. However, as Spear notes, the US employed ‘whole-of-government’ policies as far back as the Vietnam War, when it established a military-led command with development aims to ensure that government funding and resources would reflect the military’s goals. More recently, the 3D approach in the US has been a means to ensure these three areas work as one to counter the specter of terrorism.

The UK appears to have gone further than any other country in its adoption of an integrated approach, but also in implementing creative and innovative institutional arrangements that promote its use (discussed below). Moreover, the country’s overarching focus appears to be more developmental than, say, that of the United States. As Wild and Elhawary note, however, the government’s most recent efforts to promote policy integration follow disappointing results in Afghanistan and Iraq, blamed on insufficient coordination, rather than as a result of success.

The Canadian government enthusiastically embraced the 3D and then the whole-of-government approach, applying it extensively in Afghanistan, but also in lower profile efforts

in Sudan and Haiti. It also invoked policy coherence as a rationale for the 2013 abolition of CIDA as a separate agency and its amalgamation with DFAIT.

Further seeking to distance itself from the English-speaking world's dominant discourse, France asserts that its 'global approach' is historically distinct from the whole-of-government approach, as documented by Marchesin. Its conception is in fact broader, as it includes, at least in theory, government, the private sector, international organizations and NGOs. Nonetheless, the global approach greatly resembles the general understanding of 'whole of government.' To avoid association with Anglo-Saxon concepts, the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs avoids using the term 'global approach' altogether, preferring instead 'global response' or 'global efforts.'

Furness and Gänzle trace a gradual move towards EU policy coherence from which securitization might be an outcome. Although the EU's gradual coherence cannot be labelled a whole-of-government approach, the EU's pragmatic tactics certainly seem to exemplify successful applications of such an approach better than countries that have deliberately aspired to this outcome.

Although Japan's foreign aid focus has broadened to include security, the government has not embraced the trend towards a whole-of-government approach to security and development. As Carvalho and Potter illustrate, despite the fact that the two concepts are progressively intertwined in Japanese aid policy documents, security and aid are pursued separately, although the Ministry of Foreign Affairs oversees both areas.

- *More restricted discursive changes*

The post-9/11 War on Terror has had a profound influence on all Northern countries' security concerns and has influenced, albeit to varying degrees, their aid programs. The extent to which they have invoked the War on Terror, however, varies greatly across cases. Unsurprisingly, as the military hegemon and the target of the 9/11 attacks, the American government under Bush most often appealed to the War on Terror to justify the securitization of its aid program. Japan, which depends on the cover of the US military umbrella, has followed suit. Other countries and the EU, however, are more circumspect and more likely to mention the broader problem of international terrorism than to refer to the War on Terror, which is associated with the Bush administration.

Finally, the concept of human security, initially promoted and later abandoned by Canada, constitutes an important basis for Japan's peacebuilding assistance to conflict-affected countries. The human security agenda dovetailed nicely with Japan's existing aid programs by reflecting its 'anti-militarism and pacifist norms', while giving Japan a justification to branch its aid into different venues (some explicitly military). Carvalho and Potter do not identify human security to be a formal discursive tactic employed by the Japanese, the way Wild and Elhawary do with fragile states, but the results are similar. Human security made way for expanded Japanese involvement in international security, particularly after 2000, when the government adjoined the consolidation of peace in conflict-affected countries into its definition of human security. By the end of the decade, human security was a key feature of Japanese foreign policy.

Changes in aid flows

As mentioned in this volume’s introduction and illustrated in figure 1.1, total ODA aid flows from DAC countries increased dramatically between 1993 and 2013, especially after 2000. As can be seen in figure 11.1 below, this was true for the EU, the UK and the US, less so for France and Canada, but not the case for Japan (OECD 2015). Unfortunately, it is not possible to discern how much of the increase was motivated by post-9/11 security concerns or other intents, including support for the Millennium Development Goals and commitment to reaching the UN-endorsed target of 0.7 per cent ODA/gross national income.

Clearer, however, is how aid flows increasingly went to conflict-affected fragile states, especially those where Western troops invaded (notably Afghanistan and Iraq) and were stationed, as well as other countries where terrorists were thought to operate freely (such as Pakistan). After the US-led invasion in 2001, Afghanistan was catapulted from being a negligible recipient of OECD aid to its top recipient. DAC countries’ aid increased from \$158 million in 2000 to a high of \$5.9 billion in 2011, subsequently dropping to \$4.5 billion in 2013 (constant US dollars at 2012 prices) (OECD 2015; see also table 1.1 in introduction). In fact, all countries analyzed in this volume made Afghanistan a high priority for their aid.

The securitization of aid can also be seen in the emphasis placed on security-sector reform after the end of the Cold War, especially from French and British aid. Japan also funded many activities in the area of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of former combatants in civil conflicts during this time. Aid has become militarized in some countries, especially the US, to the extent that military forces rather than civilian ones have been allocated ODA funds and are delivering aid on the ground. Both Spear and Petřík note in their chapters how armies have become development actors ‘in their own right,’ while Petřík states that PRT commanders ‘viewed aid as an instrument of war’. However, as Western troops more generally, and American ones in particular, withdraw from Afghanistan and Iraq, this practice is becoming less common.

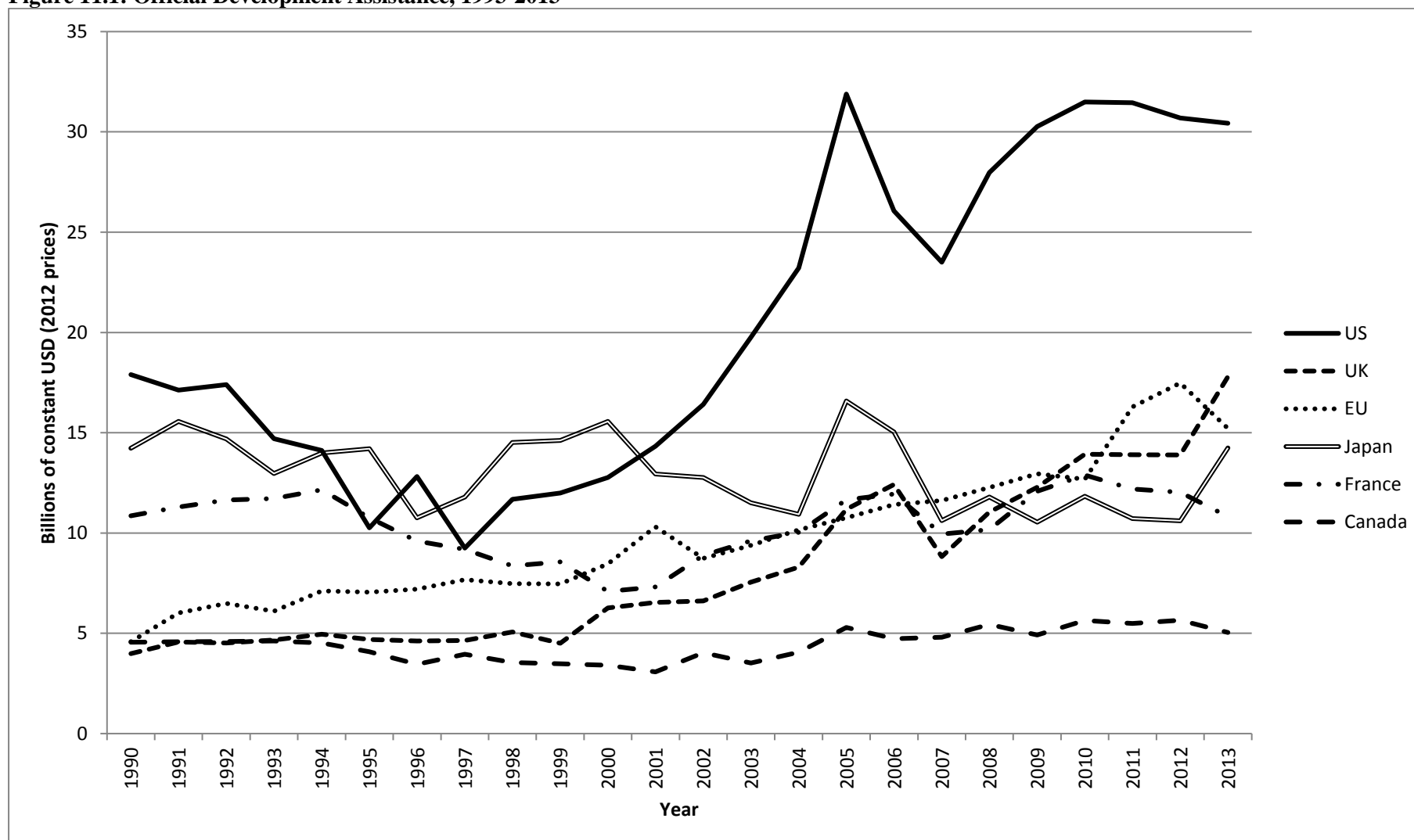
Not all priority aid recipients from the countries examined here posed direct security threats to the donor countries. Lists of top aid recipients also include countries that are not fragile (such as India) or that do not constitute a threat or, if so, only very indirectly (for instance, DRC). The UK in particular retained a strong focus on socio-economic needs in low-income countries whereas Japan concentrated on conflict resolution and post-conflict reconstruction.

Security was thus not the driver of all the changes described above. Rather, security-interests commingled with other aims – including poverty reduction, but also economic interests – which continued to underpin much aid spending.

Institutional innovations

Three types of institutional innovation accompanied the securitization of aid, most of which were also launched following 9/11: within government departments, across government departments and on the ground, in recipient countries.

Figure 11.1: Official Development Assistance, 1993-2013



Source: OECD (2015)

Most donor governments examined here reorganized their bureaucracies internally to reflect a security turn. For instance, one of the first changes was the UK's creation of a Conflict and Humanitarian Affairs Department (1997) within DFID. Canada elevated the CIDA Afghanistan country desk to the level of a task force and appointed a vice president to head it. It also created a Stabilization and Reconstruction Task Force within DFAIT (2005). France established a Directorate of Security and Defence Cooperation within its Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs (2009). Japan expanded the role of its Self-Defence Forces, gave greater autonomy to JICA (2003) and restructured its Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2006). The US Department of Defense instituted two major funding mechanisms for aid (SSTR and CERP). Additionally, the EU's new European External Action Service was given a unit for development policy coordination.

Donor governments also set up new inter-departmental coordination mechanisms and bodies, in line with the new whole-of-government approach. For instance, the UK established inter-departmental Conflict Prevention Pools (2001) and adopted several coordination mechanisms (including an inter-departmental Post-Conflict Reconstruction Unit/Stabilisation Unit starting in 2004). France also established inter-ministerial coordination mechanisms and Japan gave its foreign ministry a coordinating role. Canada created an inter-departmental Afghanistan Task Force (2007) and later amalgamated CIDA and DFAIT (2013).

The most significant changes have taken place in the US: USAID has experienced a slow, but steady decline in terms of its influence and capacity to operate autonomously. In 2001, once the State Department took over USAID's account with the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), new ODA programs (such as HIV/AIDS and programs to prevent child labor) no longer were funnelled through the agency. USAID struggled to serve its defence, development and diplomatic masters, and was castigated for its failure to deliver aid programs that were directed by diplomatic or military goals. USAID lost its autonomy entirely, and a significant number of its staff, when it was absorbed by the State Department in 2006.

The most concrete institutional innovation was the use of PRTs in Iraq and, more widely, Afghanistan. In addition to a dozen US PRTs, 16 other countries (not including France or Japan) formed their own versions of these teams in Afghanistan. Results varied. Not surprisingly, teams with civilian leaders tended to favor longer-term development projects, while military commanders perceived their teams as extensions of military operations. Some PRTs had shared leadership, but Petřík notes, “‘joint’ does not always mean equal”. Canada and the UK integrated whole-of-government leadership structures, but the Italian PRT was ultimately controlled by the military, whereas the German team split into two. Perhaps inevitably, the great financial resources of the military (especially those of the US) resulted in military control of various PRT undertakings. Moreover, PRT personnel were overwhelmingly military.

Regardless of their leadership, Petřík finds that PRT commanders appeared to spend freely significant sums of money in the pursuit of political and military objectives, while paying scant attention to development. The result was ‘a waste of resources and corruption resulting from a lack of oversight’ which ‘negatively impacted on local perceptions of aid and the actors administering it.’ Afghans in rural areas came to perceive PRTs, foreign government agencies and private contractors, along with local and international NGOs as being indistinguishable as well as indiscriminately corrupt. Regarding American PRTs, Spear notes, ‘This initiative required raising the status of development to match that of the other two legs of the triad’. US focus on 3D endeavors in Iraq and Afghanistan has only served to demonstrate the inequality between USAID's weakness and the might (albeit of limited performance) of the Department of Defense. Petřík's and Spear's accounts, along with Brown's examination of the Canadian record in Kandahar, paint a rather bleak picture of the

actual record to date of uniting security and development on the ground, in terms of both authentic coordination/integration and results achieved, from either security or development perspectives.

Explanations

This book set out to examine the effects that security concerns and interests of major donor countries have had on their rationales, priorities, policies and practices of foreign aid since the end of the Cold War. Its chapters have presented robust evidence of the securitization of foreign aid across the EU, five major donor countries, in the area of climate change, on the ground in Afghanistan and the concomitant decline of gender programming. The volume has analyzed how securitization is being justified discursively, where new aid flows are being spent and on what, along with accompanying institutional changes. Though we did not seek *a priori* to trace explanations, most of these changes can be linked directly or indirectly to post-Cold War geopolitical changes and especially the events of 11 September 2001 and the perception of terrorism as the primary source of threat. Securitization can be interpreted as a response to new, post-Cold War security concerns, but it can also be seen as a discourse strategically adopted by aid proponents to justify already rising aid budgets to sceptical politicians or voters.

Though our individual contributors may be more or less critical of the securitization phenomenon, none was surprised by it. More puzzling is the variation in the degrees of securitization that emerges when we compare cases. If the security turn is a global, time-bound explanation, focused on unfolding world events, how do we explain why the US has securitized its aid far more than Canada? How has the UK retained a strong focus on poverty, despite the security turn? Why has Japan bucked the trend towards whole-of-government approaches? Neither the individual chapters in this volume nor the broader literature (for instance, Duffield 2007) addresses these issues head on. However, in the following paragraphs, we tease out key explanatory factors.

In the complex world of the security-development nexus, causal evidence is in very short supply. A state is not a unitary, rational actor and does not have one single purpose ‘in mind’ that guides its multiple activities and micro-decisions, all of which can follow inconsistent rationales. Indeed, our volume considers many potential independent and dependent variables, and we have no reason to believe that phenomena are monocausal or that causality is unidirectional. Given these methodological hurdles, our explanatory ideas are perforce speculative.

Nonetheless, we believe that four elements provide important pieces of the puzzle. The first relies on countries’ different positions in the international system. As the global hegemon seeking to maintain its status, it seems natural that the US would insert a stronger security component into its aid programs. However, beyond this observation, such an approach has limited explanatory power. Why does the UK, another important international actor, behave more like the smaller, poverty-focused Nordic countries, whereas similarly situated France is much more self-interested? Explanations based solely on structural national interests fail to account for the construction or framing of national interests, for instance short-term narrowly defined ones (such as commercial contracts) vs. broader, long-term ones (for example, global peace). Moreover, structural explanations have trouble accounting for changes in national policies where there has been no concomitant shift in the international system.

Second, policy traditions matter. Some countries, especially Nordic ones, have strong commitments to a high level of altruistic foreign aid. This is also the case for the UK, whereas the US and France are historically far more inward-looking (see Schrader et al.

1998). Some might call this phenomenon national political culture or invoke path dependency. Tradition certainly spans ideological preferences, as even the British Conservative Party has favored continued increases in foreign aid spending even in the midst of a profound economic crisis. Similarly, Democratic administrations in the US are often no more pro-foreign aid than Republican ones. For instance, Bill Clinton’s administration cut aid budgets, while George W. Bush greatly expanded them (Lancaster 2008). Moreover, the US’s linking of security to development extends at least as far back as the Vietnam War. Conversely, Japan’s post-WWII pacifist political culture/traditions helped prevent the securitization of its aid, assuming that the government might have wanted to enact it further. Though the concept of policy traditions can help explain variation between cases, it has limited use in explaining changes in national policies over time.

Third, institutions matter. The UK’s focus on poverty is legally mandated. Laws can of course be changed, but having to enact legislation is still a barrier to transformation. Legal and other ‘firewalls’ that protect budgets’ original purposes can prevent or slow securitization, as the UK case also shows, but these same firewalls can be weakened and eventually breached. Conversely, once in place, some institutional changes can help promote securitization, especially PRTs and other measures to ensure inter-departmental integration, even if they are difficult to put into practice. Institutional changes are often hard to undo; for instance, the US State Department’s control over USAID and the abolition of Canada’s semi-autonomous aid agency are unlikely to be reversed by new governments. These changes reflect and institutionalize the politicization of aid. In the Canadian case, they will probably weaken the government’s commitment to development, though Canadian trade interests are most likely to benefit, rather than security ones, at least for the foreseeable future.

Fourth, personalities and leadership can play an important role, including in making decisions to effect institutional change or not (see previous point). For instance, had British politicians been less personally committed to creating (under Tony Blair’s New Labour government) and subsequently upholding a ‘national policy tradition’ of poverty-focused aid, they would have paid more heed to popular opinion, which was more concerned with the budget deficit. Likewise, though the idea had long been mooted, it was Stephen Harper’s government that decided to abolish CIDA without any form of consultation. The personal leadership factor is crucial in explaining policy shifts.

A final look back and the way forward

In this last section, we summarize the answers posed to our contributors (see introductory chapter, questions in italics below). We also sketch out areas for future research and lessons for those interested in lessening the impact of security considerations (or some of the less productive ones) in the provision of foreign aid.

To what extent has securitization changed the way donor governments think about foreign aid?

All governments examined in this volume, without exception, have changed their approach to foreign aid in fundamental ways, even if securitization does not affect all aspects of their aid programs.

How have donors used key concepts, such as fragile states and whole-of-government approaches, to reflect new perspectives on aid?

The concept of fragile states and the whole-of-government approach have been central to the securitization process, the former as a justification and the latter as a tool. All donor countries analyzed in this volume adopted the former, and all but Japan the latter, with some variation in terminology and institutional arrangements. In many instances, these concepts were not just embraced but also used instrumentally by different donor institutions to pursue their own goals, as demonstrated most clearly in the case of Canada.

To what extent has securitization modified the distribution of aid, including higher aid flows to new priority countries?

Securitization has significantly changed the distribution of aid. It has drastically increased aid flows to countries central to the War on Terror (Afghanistan, Iraq, Pakistan), along with some conflict-affected countries that pose less risk to Western countries (Democratic Republic of Congo, Haiti). It has also increased ODA spending in the conflict and security sector. Because securitization occurred at a time of growing aid budgets, impact on other countries and sectors (i.e., a reduction in spending) appears minimal. Still, inasmuch as growing aid budgets were not justified solely for security reasons, it ostensibly did divert potential additional resources away from those other countries and sectors.

Have donors' main bilateral aid agencies been able to use security concerns to mobilize additional resources or expand the reach of their activities? Or have the new concerns contributed to an instrumentalization of foreign aid, a new justification and means for non-development actors to use aid for other purposes?

Though experiences vary, the overall picture painted by our case studies suggests that aid agencies have been weakened as a result of the security turn. They have generally acquired larger aid budgets – though not initially USAID and cuts have more recently been enacted in Canada. Other than the UK and perhaps Japan, though, national aid agencies have not been able to apply much of their own analysis or distribute funds according to their own priorities. Rather, securitization has led to a greater instrumentalization of aid for non-development purposes, including delivery by non-aid government institutions, most notably the US military.

In sum, to what extent – and to what effect – have governments promoted and enacted the securitization of foreign aid?

Each of the chapters in this volume indicates the pervasiveness of securitization, though to varying degrees. For instance, there has been less securitization in the EU, Japan, UK, and in the area of climate change than might have been expected. The contributions by Furness and Gänzle, Carvalho and Potter, Wild and Elhawary, and Peters and Mayhew respectively suggest that the comparatively lower level of securitization of aid can in many instances be justified (notably in the attention paid to conflict prevention, broadly defined) and is not especially problematic.

Other case studies, however, suggest that security considerations have perverted the fundamental purpose of aid, which is to fight poverty and inequality, and has reoriented it towards pure donor self-interest. This securitization process, we learn from chapters by Brown, Spear, Petřík and, to a lesser extent, Marchesin and Swiss, has not only been to the

detriment of aid effectiveness from Canada, the US and France, but – despite the injection of billions of dollars – has also failed to produce robust results for security.

We thus find that fundamental concerns raised by critics, such as Woods (2005), Duffield (2007) and Aning (2010), are somewhat overstated. Securitization is neither as pervasive nor as permanent as they suggest. There are, in fact, indications that the ‘security turn’ in foreign aid has begun to reverse itself in certain countries (notably Canada and the US), suggesting that the trend has passed its peak and is now waning – though of course a new crisis could launch a new cycle of securitization.

Future research could build on some of the findings of this volume and address some as yet unanswered questions. For instance, more work is needed to identify the more positive interventions in the security-development nexus – under what conditions might they be recipient-led rather than donor-driven? More research is also needed on the effects of securitization in recipient countries, which only Petřík addressed in any detail in this volume, both regarding inter-departmental collaboration/integration and from the perspective of beneficiaries. Likewise, it would be valuable to understand better the military’s experiences of development work (which many oppose, since it is not in their core competencies) – security actors might actually become allies in resisting excessive securitization. More work would also be beneficial on the issue of sequencing security and development (for instance, Brown suggests sometimes security should come first or development will be ineffective). The gender dimension is certainly worthy of further exploration, especially its relative absence from security considerations and de facto competition with them for access to resources. In addition, the urgency of addressing climate change will only escalate in coming years.

From a more macro perspective, an incipient trend appears to be growing national commercial interests among DAC donors, already a major consideration for France, Japan and the US. This process is being fed by the rise of Southern donors (such as Brazil, China and India) that do not share Northern donors’ professed altruistic ethos. This could well lead to a ‘race to the bottom’ in using aid to promote access to natural resources, investment opportunities and markets. This would be a promising subject for another edited volume.

For those wishing to resist the securitization of foreign aid, our tentative explanations suggest a two-step strategy: 1) mobilize political leaders (through lobbying, public tribunes and other means) to 2) adopt measures, such as less formal firewall/ring fences around aid budgets or enacting or strengthening formal legislation that mandates aid’s poverty focus. This could help limit securitization to the judicious use of aid programs in the security sector for the benefit of poor and vulnerable people and prevent aid’s inefficient redirection to less benevolent, short-term goals.

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